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Curfew back, net banned as Manipur erupts again

40 students injured as police fires tear gas to disperse mob

Protesters gather as security personnel block their way along a street during a curfew in Imphal on Tuesday; Security personnel fire tear gas shells during students' protest **PHOTOS: PTI**

IMPHAL, 10 SEPT

Over 40 students were injured on Tuesday following clashes with security forces when they attempted to march towards the Raj Bhavan in Imphal to press for their demands to remove the DGP and security advisor to the state government, police said.

Meanwhile, the Manipur government on Tuesday suspended internet services in the entire state for five days amid the intensified agitation by students.

According to the orders by the Manipur government, the internet ban will continue till 15 September.

Prohibitory orders were imposed in three districts of Manipur, a day after student protests demanding the restoration of peace in the strife-torn state rocked Imphal Valley.

An indefinite curfew, preventing people from coming outside their houses, was clamped in Imphal East and West districts, while prohibitory orders under Section 163 (2) of BNSS were imposed in Thoubal. Earlier, curfew relaxation for 10 September was lifted from 5 am to 10 pm but was superseded with the latest order. Essential services, including media, electricity, court and health, are however exempted from the purview of the curfew, it said.

The Centre has also directed the deployment of two more CRPF battalions comprising about 2,000 personnel for security duties in ethnic strife-torn Manipur, official sources said.

security forces fired tear gas shells as students and women demonstrators clashed with them during the agitators' attempt to march towards the Raj Bhavan. They are demanding the removal of the DGP and the security advisor to the Manipur government.

Manipur University students also a protest rally and burnt the effigy of Union Home Minister Amit Shah. They later headed for the state secretariat, but were stopped at Kakwa in Imphal West district, he said. Meanwhile, hundreds of students from various schools and colleges spent the night at camps set up at Khwairamband Women Market in Imphal. The students, in their uniforms, were helped by women shopkeepers to set up camps at the market. The higher and technical educational department of Manipur on Monday announced that all the government colleges, aided colleges, and private colleges will remain closed till 12 September.

—*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

REJECT GOVT'S OFFER FOR TALKS

WB docs defy SC order, continue 'cease work'

KOLKATA, 10 SEPT

Protesting junior doctors in West Bengal defied a Supreme Court order, asking them to resume work by 5pm on Tuesday, and said they would continue with their protest till their demands were fulfilled and the rape and murder victim of the RG Kar Hospital was given justice.

As the medicos continued to protest for the 32nd day on Tuesday, demanding the removal of the Kolkata police commissioner and several top state health department officials, the state government said Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has written to the protesters, inviting them for a meeting at the secretariat to resolve the impasse over the incident.

However, the protesting doctors said the mail for the meeting was from the state health secretary, whose resignation they were seeking, and termed it as "insulting". They also said that restricting the number of representatives to attend the meeting to 10 was "humiliating". The top court on Monday directed the protesting resident doctors to resume work by 5pm on Tuesday, observing that if "there is continued abstention from work, there may be a likelihood of adverse action".

Asserting that their demands were not met, the protesting doctors defied the apex court's order and said they would continue with their 'cease work' till their demands were fulfilled and the rape and murder victim of the RG Kar Hospital was given justice. "We had asked the state government to remove the Kolkata police commissioner, health secretary, director of health services, and the director of medical education by 5 pm (Tuesday). We are open to discussion," one of the protesting doctors said.

The junior doctors began their strike on 9 August, hours after the body of the female trainee was found in the seminar room of the hospital. Since then, the protest has escalated, leading to disruptions in healthcare services at state-run hospitals across West Bengal. During the day, the protesting doctors marched to 'Swasthya Bhavan' – the headquarters of the health department in Salt Lake – and staged a sit-in outside the office building to press for their demand.

—*PTI*

Doctors march towards Swasthya Bhawan in protest over RG Kar Hospital rape and murder, in Kolkata on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

SC Collegium names 5 for Madras HC judges

MUMBAI, 10 SEPT

Supreme Court collegium on Tuesday recommended the names of Justice Lekshmana Chandra Victoria Gowri and four other additional judges for permanent judgeship of the Madras High Court. The appointment of Justice Gowri as an additional judge of the High Court last year had created controversy. Before her elevation as an additional judge, several members of the bar had written to the Chief Justice of India flagging her alleged hate speeches and affiliation to BJP. The judges whose names were cleared are Justices Lekshmana Chandra Gowri, Pillaipakkam Balaji, Kandhasami Ramakrishnan, Ramachandran Kalaimathi and K Govindarajan Thilakavadi. —*PTI*

China's drug regulator clears Mpox vaccine

BEIJING, 10 SEPT

China's top drug regulator has cleared a mpox vaccine developed by local drug firm Sinopharm for clinical trials which could be the country's first experimental dose to battle the deadly disease. The domestic vaccine candidate, created by the Shanghai Institute of Biological Products and administered by Sinopharm, is expected to play an important role in preventing and controlling mpox infections, the company said in a statement released on Monday afternoon. There is currently no approved mpox vaccine in China. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

RBI slaps ₹2.91 cr fine on Axis Bank and HDFC Bank

MUMBAI, 10 SEPT

RBI has imposed penalties totalling Rs 2.91 crore on Axis Bank and HDFC Bank for certain deficiencies in statutory and regulatory compliance. RBI said a penalty of Rs 1.91 crore has been imposed on Axis Bank for contravention of certain provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, and non-compliance with certain directions on 'Interest Rate on Deposits', 'Know Your Customer (KYC)' and 'Credit Flow to Agriculture-Collateral free agricultural loans'. A penalty of Rs 1 crore has been imposed on HDFC Bank for non-compliance with certain directions on 'interest rate on deposits', by banks' and 'customer service in banks', it said in another release —*PTI*

India inks pact for operating nuclear plants in UAE

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

India and the UAE have inked a pact that provides a framework for giving services for operation and maintenance of nuclear plants in the emirate.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Bhuwan Chandra Pathak, Chairman and Managing Director of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), and Mohamed Al Hammadi, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) of the UAE.

The MoU was inked during the ongoing visit of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to India. Al Nahyan held talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday.

"The MoU provides a general framework for the possible collaboration between the NPCIL & ENEC in the relevant fields, which inter alia include developing supply chains, sharing experience and providing services for Operation & Maintenance of Nuclear Energy Plants, providing nuclear consulting services, human resources development & training, research and development etc," a statement by the NPCIL said. The NPCIL is a Public Sector Enterprise of the Department of Atomic Energy and operates all civil nuclear power plants in the country.

The ENEC is wholly owned by the Abu Dhabi Development Holding Company PJSC, which in turn is wholly owned by the government of the UAE.

—*PTI*

HC SLAMS KERALA FOR INACTION ON HEMA REPORT

KOCHI, 10 SEPT

Kerala High Court on Tuesday pulled up the Left government in the state saying its inaction on the Justice Hema Committee report was "alarming." A special division bench of Justices AK Jayasankaran Nambiar and CS Sudha said the government got the report years ago and ought to have immediately responded and directed that the full report be handed over to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to take requisite action.

It also asked why the state was silent for so long.

—*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

IAF Wing Commander booked for raping junior

SRINAGAR, 10 SEPT

An FIR has been registered against a Wing Commander following complaints of rape by a woman flying officer, officials said here on Tuesday.

Both the IAF officers are currently stationed in Srinagar.

After the complaint, the FIR under "relevant sections of the law" was filed at Budgam police station in central Kashmir on Saturday, a senior police officer said. The IAF said it is cooperating with the police.

The flying officer has said in her complaint that she has been suffering harassment, sexual assault and mental torture over the past two years.

The officer said that the senior forced her into oral sex and molested her after a New Year party at the officers' mess on 31 December, 2023. Soon after she filed a complaint and a Colonel-rank officer was ordered to investigate the incident. The Wing Commander was made to sit down with her twice in January this year to record the statements, she alleged and soon after the case was closed and the senior faced no consequences. The officer has accused senior IAF officers of the station of not taking her complaint seriously. "The bias of Station authorities to aid the sexual offender was very heartbreaking for me… Medical examination was not done till the time I insisted multiple times. It was done on the last day of the investigation by the Internal Committee," she said.

—*Agencies*

> **The bias of Station authorities to aid the sexual offender was very heartbreaking for me. Medical examination was not done till the time I insisted multiple times**
>
> -IAF flying officer

Israel approaches India for 10,000 construction workers

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Israel has approached India to carry out a recruitment drive again for 10,000 construction workers and 5,000 caregivers simultaneously to plug the skill gap in infrastructure and health sectors, the National Skill Development Corporation said.

This comes on the back of a similar request made by Israel earlier this year, the NSDC said. The statement assumes significance as a media report on Tuesday claimed faulty selection under a bilateral jobs scheme, under which Indians would be taken to Israel to work in the construction sector, after over 1 lakh Palestinian workers were banned.

Citing data from the Israeli Embassy, the report claimed that around 5,000 workers each have been recruited through two "pathways": Government-to-Government (G2G) handled by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Business-to-Business (B2B) through private agencies overseen by the Ministry of External Affairs.

A team of assessors will visit India in the coming week to carry out the skill tests. The second round of recruitment drive for construction workers is to take place in Maharashtra, it stated.

In the first round of recruitment of construction workers for Israel, a total of 16,832 candidates appeared for skill tests in their trade out of which 10349 candidates were selected. Those selected will earn a salary of Rs 1.92 lakh per month, along with medical insurance, food, and accommodation. —*PTI*

CM forms 5-minister panel to review scams under BJP

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday constituted a five-member ministerial committee to review and coordinate the action to be taken in connection with the ongoing probe by the State government and investigating agencies into various scams that have taken place, especially during BJP rule.

The committee headed by Home Minister G Parameshwara has been asked to complete the task in two months' time.

Minister HK Patil, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, Rural Development Minister Priyank Kharge and Labour Minister Santosh Lad are the members of the committee. "A cabinet sub-committee was constituted during the previous cabinet (meeting), I have been made the Chairman for it. The Chief Minister has said that the report should be submitted in two months, we have started (the process). We have listed about 20-25 scams, we will review all of them," he said. "….if BJP indulge in vendetta politics, what should we do? We should also do politics, so we will seek reports and act on them," he said . —*PTI*

GOVT TO START TRAINING

5,000 commandos to fight cyber threats

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Amit Shah **PHOTO: PTI**

Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday announced several new initiatives, including training 5,000 'Cyber Commandos', setting up a web-based data registry as well as a portal to share cybercrime information, and a national registry of suspects to prevent future crimes in a major step towards ensuring cyber security,.

Under the 'Cyber Commandos' programme, a special wing of trained personnel in states/UTs and central police organisations like the CBI will be established to counter threats to the cyber security landscape in the country.

The trained cyber commandos are expected to assist states and central agencies in securing the digital space.

He urged cybersecurity agencies to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify the modus operandi of criminals duping people of their hard-earned money, spreading fake news and abusing women and children online.

India hosts around 46 per cent or almost half of global digital transactions, making the job of these agencies "challenging", he said while delivering a keynote speech during the first foundation day celebrations of the I4C or Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre here.

The I4C, established in 2018, is a department under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

It is tasked with establishing a national-level coordination centre to address all cybercrime-related issues in the country.

During the event, Shah launched four platforms of the I4C -- cyber fraud mitigation centre (CFMC), the 'Samanvaya' platform, a cyber commandos programme and a suspect registry. —*PTI*

Darshan case: State may establish fast-track court

Will consult legal experts on it, says City Police Commissioner

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

State government is contemplating the establishment of a fast-track court to hear Renukaswamy murder case, in which Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa and 16 others are accused, said Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday

City police filed a 3,991-page preliminary chargesheet on Kannada actor Darshan and 16 others last week.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda said police will discuss with legal experts and take a decision on constituting a fast-track court. "We have asked for reports on the case and a chargesheet will be filed. Once all the reports are compiled, we are likely to establish a fast-track court," he said.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda said the police will discuss with legal experts and take a decision on the issue of constituting such a court.

About the inquiry into "illegalities" at Parappana Agrahara Central prison here, Dayananda said an investigation is on and three cases have been registered. "Probe is being done by South East Division police. Also, an inquiry has been ordered by State

Darshan Thoogudeepa ***PHOTO: PTI***

government regarding the loopholes in the jail and measures to be taken to plug them, which is being done by Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) Chandragupta," he said.

With court permission, Darshan was recently shifted to Ballari prison from the Parappana Agrahara Central jail here, after a photograph of him hanging out with three others, including a rowdy-sheeter, on the lawns of the jail had gone viral, sparking an uproar.

Dayananda said a few more reports are yet to come from Central Forensic Science Laboratory in connection with Renukaswamy murder case. "But, as we had gathered major evidence, the chargesheet in the case has been submitted to the court."

—PTI, Salar News

HC restrains media from publishing chargesheet info

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Karnataka High Court on Tuesday issued an ex-parte interim order barring media outlets from broadcasting, printing, or publishing any information from the chargesheet against Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is accused along with 16 others in Renukaswamy murder case. The restriction will remain in place until the next hearing.

Justice Hemant Chandangoudar, presiding over a single-judge bench, passed the order following a plea by the 47-year-old actor, who requested the court to restrain media organisations from disseminating confidential details contained in the chargesheet and other materials gathered during the investigation. The case is pending before a Magistrate court.

The High Court noted that despite an injunction issued by a lower court on 27 August in a suit filed by Darshan's wife Vijayalakshmi, media outlets continued to share confidential information.

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday said details of the chargesheet coming out in the public domain, will not have any impact on court proceedings. He said based on the chargesheet submitted and evidence given by police to the court concerned, the case will proceed further.

Police last week submitted to the court a 3,991-page preliminary chargesheet in the case.

On allegations by some BJP leaders that details of the chargesheet are being divulged to divert attention from a site allotment scam allegedly involving the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Parameshwara said they are independent cases. *—PTI*

RUCKUS AT HOSPITAL

Doctors and medical staff stage a protest at Araluguppe Mallegowda District Hospital in Chikkamagaluru after a patient allegedly attacked an on-duty doctor on Tuesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Woman grabs doctor by collar, hurls footwear at him

C'MAGALURU, 10 SEPT

Doctors and staff at the Araluguppe Mallegowda District Hospital in Chikkamagaluru protested on Tuesday by shutting down the outpatient department after a woman allegedly grabbed a physician by his collar and hurled a footwear at him.

According to official sources, when the doctor, Venkatesh BS, was on duty at the emergency unit of the government hospital, a person named Irfan, who was injured in a scuffle, came for treatment.

"When the doctor was examining Irfan, a group of people, who were the patient's relatives, gathered there and were making noise. When the doctor asked everyone else other than the patient to go out, an argument broke out

- When the doctor was examining Irfan, a group of people, who were the patient's relatives, gathered there and were making noise. When the doctor asked everyone else other than the patient to go out, an argument broke out

tives, gathered there and were making noise. When the doctor asked everyone else other than the patient to go out, an argument broke out. One of the injured patient's kin named Taslim, who was apparently enraged, removed her footwear and hurled it at the Doctor, she subsequently grabbed him by the collar and pulled him," they said.

Other doctors and staff of the hospital staged a protest by shutting down the outpatient department. They gathered in front of the district surgeon's office and demanded immediate arrest of those who assaulted the Doctor. The District Surgeon wrote to the police, alleging abuse, assault and threat to the life of the doctor by people involved in the incident. He demanded registering a case against those involved in the incident and to take necessary legal action against them, and also to provide security to Doctors and staff at the hospital to discharge their duty. *—PTI*

State, British Council open 4 new skilling programmes

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Karnataka government on Tuesday has launched four new skilling programmes together with the British Council.

British Council, the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural exchange, had signed an MoU with Karnataka State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) to this effect on 26 February.

The four programmes include 'Scholars for Outstanding Undergraduate Talent' (SCOUT) programme, 'English Skills for Youth', an initiative by British Council and Microsoft India to empower students in government engineering colleges in Karnataka, 'Capacity Building Training for International Officers,' and a 'Freemium Digital Library Wall' at Bengaluru University.

Under the SCOUT programme, KSHEC will select 30 students, which include five students and one faculty member each from Bangalore University, Bengaluru City University, Gulbarga University Kalaburgi, Raichur University, Tumkur University and Rani Channamma University, as well as two KSHEC officials to participate in a two-week immersive learning experience at the University of East London from 9-22 November.

English Skills for Youth will be implemented across 16 government engineering colleges under the KSHEC, benefiting 5,795 students in semesters II and III.

Students will complete 40 hours of self-paced coursework via the Microsoft Learning Management System (LMS), supplemented by 30 hours of in-person or blended English Practice Club sessions. *—PTI*

RIDE FOR PEACE

Volunteers took part a bicycle rally, titled 'Ride For Peace', highlighting the message of global peace and environment, in Bengaluru on Tuesday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

CONG LEADERS TO RAHUL: WARN CM WANNABES

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

A group of 12 Congress leaders has urged party high command to intervene after several leaders have thrown their hats into the ring as possible replacements if Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is forced to step down over MUDA land allotment scam.

The workers are former minister BL Shankar; ex-MP VS Ugrappa; Chairman of Guarantee Implementation Committee HM Revanna; ex-chairman of legislative council VR Sudharsha; ex-MP L Hanumanthaiah; ex-MP BN Chandrappa; MLC Prakash Rathod, ex-MLC PR Ramesh; KPCC General Secretary Dwarakanath CS; KPCC General Secretary SH Chandrambuly; Chairman of KPCC Legal Cell Amarnathan HD; former chairman of State Waqf Board Khalid Ahmed and MLC candidate Mehbooba Pasha.

The letter addressed to Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi said instead of issuing statements claiming the post of Chief Minister, the party workers should fight against BJP and JD(S). "Due to this many of our leaders and workers are getting demoralised and losing their hopes in the government and the party," the letter said.

The letter comes after a verbal duel has erupted between two senior ministers MB Patil and Shivanand Patil over the issue of using seniority as the basis for becoming the Chief Minister. "One day or another, I will become the Chief Minister. I have the desire but not the greed," Patil said. The leaders asked the high command to take note of the statements issued by CM wannabes and warm them not to issues such damaging statements. *—Salar News*

Traffic advisory issued for Ganesha idol processions

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

In view of the processions carrying Ganesha idols on Wednesday, traffic arrangements have been implemented in parts of the City to ensure smooth vehicular movement.

The processions, which will run from 5pm on Wednesday to 6am on Thursday, will affect traffic in mainly two areas: Halasuru and Hongasandra-Madiwala. The processions start from 80 Feet and 100 Feet Roads in Indiranagar, pass through Old Madras Road and conclude at Halasuru Lake. Traffic will be restricted on Old Madras Road from Anjaneya Junction to Kensington Junction and Gurudwara Junction, as well as on Gangadhara Chetty Road from Nagamma Temple Junction to Thiruvalluvar Statue Junction.

Vehicles taking 80ft and

PHOTO: PTI

100ft roads should turn left at Anjaneya Junction and travel via Swami Vivekananda Road, Adarsh Junction, Ramaiah Junction, Kamadhenu Junction, Trinity Junction and Webs Junction. Vehicles approaching Old Madras Road from MG Road should turn right at Ramaiah Junction, proceeding via Adarsh Junction, Anjaneya Junction and Swami Vivekananda Road. Vehicles coming from Halasuru Road should proceed through Begum Mahal Junction from Bazar Street to Ramaiah Junction.

Vehicles from Cubbon Road should turn right at Manipal Junction, turn left at Webs Junction and travel through Trinity Junction towards Swami Vivekananda Road. Vehicles from Dickenson Road via St John's Road should turn right at Sri Circle, pass through Ajanta Road, turn right at RBI Junction and then take a left turn at Thiruvalluvar Statue Junction to reach Gangadhara Chetty.

In Hongasandra, Ganesha immersion will occur from 4pm to 10pm, starting at Hongasandra Bus Stop and proceeding to Kodichikkanahalli Junction. Traffic heading towards Beguru from Kodichikkanahalli Junction via Hongasandra Main Road will be blocked at Kodichikkanahalli Junction. Traffic coming towards Kodichikkanahalli Junction from Begur Main Road will be blocked at PK Kalyana Mantapa cross, which is at Hulimavu Traffic Police Station border.

The vehicles going from Begur to Bommanahalli Junction on Hosur Main Road can go directly to Kudlu Gate, and take a right turn to reach Begur Main Road. Vehicles from Bommanahalli Junction towards Devarachikkana halli and Begur should turn right at Kodichikkanahalli Junction and continue through D Mart Junction. Vehicles from Begur towards Kodichikkanahalli can turn left at PK Kalyana Mantapa cross under Hulimavu Traffic Police Station, using internal roads to reach Kodichikkanahalli and then proceed towards Devarachikkanahalli and Bommanahalli Junction via Kodichikkanahalli Junction. *—Salar News*

No question of CM change at present: Parameshwara

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday said that some Congress leaders are weighing in for Chief Minister's post in the event of leadership change in Karnataka as they are capable of holding the top position. He, however, said there is no question of changing the Chief Minister at this point of time.

As Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the Governor's sanction for his prosecution in the MUDA site allotment case is being heard in the High Court, Congress leaders seem to be preparing for a race to become CM, in case of leadership change, with several of them openly expressing their desire.

"Everyone is capable, so that is why they are talking about it, but where is the question of changing the Chief Minister at this point of time?" Parameshwara said.

G Parameshwara ***PHOTO: PTI***

Meanwhile, State Congress Working President Manjunath Bhandary and MLC Dinesh Gooligowda on Monday wrote to AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge, asking him to curb speculation over the Chief Minister's tenure. Parameshwara said: "I have also said on several occasions that discussion regarding the post of the Chief Minister is unnecessary. There is a Chief Minister and the administration is running smoothly, and it is a known fact to everyone that that there is no chance of Chief Minister change in the current situation." *—PTI*

EASY PAY

BESCOM's EV Mithra app to enable charging via Whatsapp

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) has introduced the ability to start and pay for EV charging sessions via Whatsapp.

BESCOM has also launched an innovative AI-based customer support bot called https://ev.bot powered by Pulse Energy, said a statement from the company on Tuesday. The new interface to EV Mithra app will provide a seamless charging experience for electric vehicle users, said Mahantesh Bilagi, Managing Director, BESCOM.

The app, which has more than 15,000 downloads, is compatible with both Android and

PHOTO: PTI

iOS devices and is available in nine languages, including Kannada. Among the app's key functionalities are user profile management, secure access via OTP or RFID, charging station details, and a reservation system with booking history. EV users can also enjoy flexible payment, including wallet top-ups, UPI services like Google Pay and PhonePe, and Bill Desk payments.

BESCOM has also introduced a refund assurance system. In case of any technical issues that interrupt the charging process, users will receive refunds for the amount paid, further enhancing user confidence in the platform.

A key upgrade to the app is the introduction of intelligent AI-based customer support. Partnering with Pulse Energy, BESCOM has introduced the EV.bot, an AI-enabled platform designed to assist users with troubleshooting. *—Salar News*

ACTOR DHRUVA SARJA'S MANAGER HELD FOR ASSAULT

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Banashankari police have reportedly arrested Ashwin, the manager of actor Dhruva Sarja along with three others for assaulting the actor's personal fitness and gym trainer, Prashanth Poojari.

However, Banashankari police denied any arrest and the gym trainer was not available for comments. The attack occurred on KR Road while Poojari was returning home after a workout session at Sarja's residence in Banashankari.

Poojari, 31, was riding his bike when two men on a motorcycle, armed with a sword and a baseball bat, attempted to assault him on 26 May. Although he managed to dodge the attackers, he sustained injuries. *—Salar News*

CM Siddaramaiah with Global Board of Directors Mission of US-India Business Council in Bengaluru on Tuesday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

READY TO CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS: CM

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told a high-level delegate of the US-India Business Council (USIBC) on Tuesday that the State is deeply committed to fostering an environment that nurtures innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable growth.

"Karnataka is open for business. We welcome you to explore the great opportunities our state has to offer. Whether it's in the field of information technology, biotechnology, aerospace, or any other sector, we are ready to collaborate and co-create solutions that can address global challenges," he said.

He said the effort is tantamount to crafting the blueprint for a future that is more interconnected and prosperous than ever before. "We are home to some of the world's leading IT firms, biotechnology enterprises, and start-ups. Our policies are designed to support innovation, ease of doing business, and sustainable development," he added. *—PTI*

ONAM SPL TRAIN TO CONNECT HUBBALLI & KOCHUVELI

HUBBALLI, 10 SEPT

To cater to the surge in passenger traffic during the upcoming Onam festival, South Western Railway (SWR) announced a special train between Hubballi and Kochuveli in Kerala.

The single round-trip special train, numbered 07333, will depart Hubballi on 13 September, 2024, at 6.55am, reaching Kochuveli on 14 September at 6.45am.

For the return journey, train number 07334 will leave Kochuveli on 14 September at 12.50pm, arriving back at Hubballi on 15 September at 12.50pm. The train will stop at major stations, including Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Erode, Coimbatore, Palakkad, and Ernakulam Town. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

Yechury in 'critical' condition, on ventilator at AIIMS

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury's condition is "critical" and he is on respiratory support at AIIMS, his party said on Tuesday. The 72-year-old Yechury is being treated for acute respiratory tract infection at the ICU in AIIMS, it said in a statement. A multi-disciplinary team of doctors is closely monitoring the condition of Yechury, which is critical at this time, the party said. Yechury was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) on 19 August for the treatment of a pneumonia-like chest infection. *—PTI*

BJP: No friendly contests between Mahayuti allies

MUMBAI, 10 SEPT

Former Union minister and BJP leader Raosaheb Danve on Tuesday said there will be no friendly contests between the constituents of the Mahayuti in the upcoming Maharashtra assembly election and winnability of a candidate will be the only yardstick to decide the allocation of seats. Talking to reporters, Danve denied that the Mahayuti constituents —BJP, Shiv Sena and NCP — will declare a chief ministerial face. Meanwhile, Maharashtra NCP chief Sunil Tatkare said the top brass of his party has held talks with Union minister Amit Shah about contesting the coming assembly elections unitedly. "Our goal is to come to power again. We had a detailed discussion on contesting polls unitedly," he added. *—PTI*

Vinesh shouldn't have joined politics now, says Mahavir

CHANDIGARH, 10 SEPT

Olympian Vinesh Phogat's uncle and celebrated wrestling coach Mahavir Phogat said her niece should not have joined politics at this stage and aimed for an Olympic gold in 2028, days after the Congress fielded her from Julana for 5 October Haryana assembly polls. Mahavir, whose Olympian daughter Babita Phogat joined BJP ahead of the 2019 assembly elections, exuded confidence that the party will retain power in Haryana for a third time in a row. Babita, a Commonwealth Games medal-winner freestyle wrestler who inspired the Bollywood film 'Dangal', contested the 2019 polls unsuccessfully from Dadri. He also claimed that when he spoke with Vinesh recently she had no intentions of joining politics. Mahavir said, "It was my wish that she focus on her game and win a gold medal in the 2028 Olympics. I feel she should not have joined politics at this stage. I wanted her to continue wrestling." *—PTI*

Jarange to launch indefinite fast on 16 Sept over quota

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 10 SEPT

Activist Manoj Jarange on Tuesday announced to launch an indefinite fast from 16 September midnight to press for the Maratha reservation demand. In February, the Maharashtra legislature passed a bill providing 10 per cent reservation for the Maratha community in education and government jobs, but Jarange is insisting on the inclusion of Marathas in the Other Backward Class (OBC) category. "17 September is the liberation day (for Marathwada), when is the Maratha community going to be liberated?" he asked. Jarange on Monday spoke to state Minorities Development Minister Abdul Sattar over phone regarding the demand for Maratha quota and giving Kunbi certificates to all Marathas. *—PTI*

RG Kar issues notice to 51 docs over protest

Docs have been accused of cultural intimidation

KOLKATA, 10 SEPT

RG Kar Medical College and Hospital has issued a notice to 51 doctors for promoting a culture of intimidation, endangering the democratic atmosphere of the institution and has been asked to appear before the enquiry committee on 11 September.

They have to prove their innocence before the committee, the notice issued by the hospital authority said.

According to the decision made by the Special Council Committee of the RG Kar Hospital, access to the institution's campus is restricted for those 51 doctors unless summoned by the enquiry committee.

The family of the 31-year-old doctor, slammed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her remarks asking people to "return to (Durga) Puja." The victim's parents responded sharply to Banerjee's comments, questioning how they could celebrate festivities after losing their daughter. "What about our festivities when we have lost our daughter? Let her return our daughter." *—PTI*

Junior doctors hold broom and shout slogans as they march towards Swasthya Bhawan during a protest over the alleged rape and murder incident, in Kolkata, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

RG Kar's Ghosh sent to judicial custody till 23 Sept

Kolkata, 10 Sept

Former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh was on Tuesday sent to judicial custody till 23 September by a special CBI court in the financial irregularities case. The court also sent his security personnel Afsar Ali and two alleged associates, contractors Vendors Biplab Sinha and Suman Hazra, to judicial custody till 23 September. *—PTI*

A police personnel near the damaged Audi owned by Maharashtra BJP Chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule's son Sanket Bawankule **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP leader's son flees, driver held for car crash

NAGPUR, 10 SEPT

Police have arrested the driver of a luxury car, owned by Maharashtra BJP chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule's son, after it hit several vehicles in Nagpur city, an official said on Tuesday.

The person driving the car, Arjun Hawre, was arrested on Monday night and later released on bail (at the local police station), a senior police official told PTI.

The Audi car owned by Bawankule's son Sanket hit several vehicles in Ramdaspeth area here in the early hours of Monday, after which Hawre and one more occupant - Ronit Chittamwar - were apprehended by police.

An official from Sitabuldi police station on Monday said the Audi car first collided with complainant Jitendra Sonkamble's car and then with a moped, leaving two youth riding it injured. *—PTI*

> **If Devendra Fadnavis, who also hails from Nagpur, fails to lead the home department effectively, then he is not eligible for such a position.**
>
> -Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena (UBT)

Row erupts over Rahul's remarks on Sikhs in US

WASHINGTON, 10 SEPT

Stressing that fight is not about politics, Congress MP and Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said that fight is about whether he, as a Sikh, is going to be allowed to wear a turban in India and would be able to visit a Gurdwara.

While interacting with members of the Indian community in Virginia, Congress MP said, "First of all, you have to understand what the fight is about. Fight is not about politics. It is superficial. What is your name? The fight is about whether...he as a Sikh is going to be allowed to wear his turban in India. Or he as a Sikh is going to be able to go to Gurdwara. That's what the fight is about and not just for him, for all religions."

BJP came down heavily on Rahul Gandhi over his remarks, saying the Congress leader is trying to create a "dangerous narrative" by speaking on "sensitive issues" abroad.

Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri told a press conference at BJP headquarters that Gandhi's remarks were "sinister" in nature. *—PTI*

MP Engineer Rashid gets interim bail

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

A Delhi court on Tuesday granted interim bail till 2 October to Lok Sabha MP Engineer Rashid in a terror funding case.

Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in Baramulla.

Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh granted the relief to Rashid, who had moved the court seeking interim bail to campaign in the upcoming Jammu & Kashmir assembly elections.

"I am granting interim bail till 2 October. He will have to surrender on 3 October," the judge said.

The judge granted Rashid the relief on a personal bond of Rs 2 lakh and one surety of the like amount.

On 5 July, the court had granted Rashid custody parole to take the oath as a member of the Lok Sabha.

Rashid has been in jail since 2019 after he was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terror funding case. *—PTI*

Sheikh Abdul Rashid. **PHOTO: ANI**

FIGHT INTENSIFIES

BJP drops minister in 2nd list for Haryana polls

Union Minister Manohar Lal with Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini during a roadshow in Kurukshetra, Haryana on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

CHANDIGARH, 10 SEPT

BJP on Tuesday released a second list of candidates for Haryana Assembly polls, denying tickets to two ministers and replacing its nominee for the Pehowa seat.

The list, notified by BJP national general secretary Arun Singh, has names of 21 candidates, including that of the new nominee for Pehowa. The ruling party in Haryana is yet to announce candidates for Mahendragarh, NIT Faridabad, and Sirsa seats.

In its first list of candidates announced on 4 September, BJP nominated Kamaljeet Singh Ajrana for the Pehowa seat but replaced him with Jai Bhagwan Sharma in the second list. Incumbent MLA of Pehowa and former minister Sandeep Singh has been denied re-nomination.

Ajrana is learnt to have faced stiff opposition to his candidature from some aspirants.

While eight women figured in the first list of candidates, BJP's second list has two women -- Krishna Gahlawat from the Rai seat and Bimla Chaudhary from the Pataudi (SC) segment.

BJP has fielded Pawan Saini, considered close to Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, from the Naraingarh seat. *—PTI*

Haryana CM Saini files nomination

Chandigarh, 10 Sept

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini filed his nomination papers on Tuesday from the Ladwa assembly constituency for 5 October state assembly polls. He was accompanied by his wife Suman Saini, Union minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Kurukshetra MP Naveen Jindal. Before filing his nomination, Saini held a roadshow in the Ladwa assembly segment where BJP supporters greeted him with garlands. *—PTI*

AAP releases 2nd list for Haryana polls

CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday released its second list of nine candidates for the Haryana assembly polls, fielding former minister Chhatar Pal Singh from Barwala a day after he switched over from BJP.

The party's first list of 20 candidates was released on Monday after seat-sharing talks with the Congress dragged on for days without much headway.

According to the fresh list, Rita Bamaniya will contest from Sadhaura, Kishan Bajaj from Thanesar, Hawa Singh from Indri.

The party has fielded Mukhtiyar Singh Bazigar from Ratia, Bhupendra Beniwal from Adampur, and Chhatar Pal Singh from Barwala.

Jawahar Lal will contest from Bawal, Pravesh Mehta from Faridabad and Abash Chandela from Tigaon, according to the list.

The party said in a statement that former minister Chhatar Pal Singh, who has been fielded from Barwala, quit BJP on Monday to join AAP.

AAP released its first list of 20 candidates on Monday, deciding to go solo in the polls after it could not arrive at a mutually acceptable seat-sharing formula with Congress. *—PTI*

Buch made crores from M&M & ICICI, says Cong

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Congress on Tuesday claimed that SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch had a 99 per cent stake in a firm when it provided consultancy services to the Mahindra and Mahindra Group and her husband received Rs 4.78 crore as income from the conglomerate while she was adjudicating cases of the same group.

Agora Advisory Pvt Ltd, owned by Madhabi Puri Buch, earned consultancy fees from listed companies including Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, Pidilite Ltd, and Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd, raising conflict-of-interest questions for Buch, the current chair of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi was aware that Buch owns 99 per cent of Agora Advisory Private Limited and is receiving significant fees from listed entities, including Mahindra and Mahindra.

Putting out a fresh set of "revelations" on the issue of conflict of interest involving the SEBI chairperson, Ramesh said on X, "Our questions are directed pointedly at the non-biological PM who appointed her in the first place -- Is the Prime Minister aware that Madhabi Buch owns 99 per cent of Agora Advisory Private Limited and is receiving significant fees from listed entities, Mahindra & Mahindra?"

Mahindra and Mahindra Group also said that none of the five SEBI orders or approvals referenced in the allegations are relevant and three out of the five do not pertain to the company or any of its subsidiaries. *—PTI*

SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch **PHOTO: X@Anilcherukara**

- Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh asked whether Modi was aware that Buch owns 99 per cent of Agora Advisory Private Limited

EAM: India willing to give advice to Russia & Ukraine

BERLIN, 10 SEPT

Underlining that the Ukraine conflict cannot be resolved on the battlefield, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday that Russia and Ukraine have to negotiate, and if they want advice, India is always willing to give.

Jaishankar made the comments while responding to questions at the Annual Ambassadors' Conference of the German Foreign Office in Berlin, a day after he held a "useful conversation" with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on the margins of the India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits to Russia and Ukraine, he said that the Indian leader has said in Moscow and Kyiv that this is not an era of war.

"We don't think you're going to get a solution out of the battlefield. We think you've got to negotiate... If you want advice, we are always willing to give it...," he added.

Noting that countries have differences and neighbours have differences, Jaishankar said that conflicts are not a good way of resolving differences. *—PTI*

1ST ANRF MEET

PAIR scheme to boost higher edu research

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

The government will launch Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research (PAIR) programme designed to elevate research capabilities in higher education institutions (HEIs) by linking top-tier research institutions with those where research capability is limited, creating a collaborative mentorship environment.

The decision was taken during the inaugural Governing Board meeting of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) on Tuesday, Prof Abhay Karandikar, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology, said.

During a press briefing following the meeting, Karandikar highlighted a crucial issue hindering India's research potential: less than 1 per cent of the nation's 40,000 HEIs are currently engaged in research activities.

"Through PAIR, ANRF will link top-tier research institutions with those where research capability is limited, creating a collaborative mentorship environment," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed the need to identify and remove obstacles in the research ecosystem and focus on localised solution to global problems, as he chaired ANRF meet.

During the meeting, Modi said a new beginning had been made with the first meeting of the governing body of Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF).

Modi also talked about setting big targets, focusing on attaining them and conducting pathbreaking research. He said research should focus on finding new solutions to existing problems.

ANRF is set to launch the Mission for Advancement in High-impact Areas (MAHA) to focus on critical areas of research. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the first general board meeting of the newly formed ANRF meet, in New Delhi, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

SC grants relief to Tharoor in 'scorpion on Shivling' case

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

In a relief for Shashi Tharoor, the Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed proceedings before a trial court in a defamation case lodged against the Congress MP for his alleged "scorpion on Shivling" remarks targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice R Mahadevan issued notice to the Delhi Police and BJP leader Rajiv Babbar who is the complainant in the case.

Tharoor was supposed to appear before a trial court here on Tuesday in pursuance to a Delhi high court order.

"Issue notice returnable in four weeks. In the meantime, further proceedings in pursuance to the impugned judgement are stayed," the bench said.

Shashi Tharoor **PHOTO: PTI**

He stated the High Court has expanded the definition of "person aggrieved" in a defamation case to unacceptable limits.

The top court expressed surprise that in 2012, the statement was not defamatory when the article was originally published.

The criminal complaint was filed against Tharoor in the trial court by Babbar, who claimed that his religious sentiments were hurt by the Congress leader's statement. *—PTI*

PHOTO:www.polavaramrr.ap.gov.in

'Polavaram project will impact 236 villages in Odisha'

BHUBANESWAR, 10 SEPT

Opposition Biju Janata Dal on Tuesday claimed that the multi-purpose Polavaram project in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh will affect the lives and livelihood of people residing in 236 villages in Odisha's Malkangiri district. The opposition party made the claim based on a report of a fact-finding team of the party comprising senior leaders led by Debi Prasad Mishra. The team recently submitted its report to BJD president Naveen Patnaik after visiting the area. The report pointed out that people living in Kalimela and Padia blocks along with inhabitants of Motu gram panchayat in Malkangiri district will lose their houses and agricultural land in the backwaters of the project. "As such, Malkangiri district receives more rainfall. The backwaters of Polavaram project will further worsen the situation in Malkangiri district," Mishra said. *—PTI*

6 senior advocates appointed ASGs to defend govt in SC

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

The government has appointed six senior advocates as additional solicitors general to represent it in the Supreme Court. According to an order of the Appointments Committee of Cabinet issued on Monday, the ASGs have been appointed for a period of three years. Those appointed are S Dwarakanath, Archana Pathak Dave, Satya Darshi Sanjay, Brijender Chahar, Raghavendra P Shankar and Rajkumar Bhaskar Thakare (Raja Thakare), the order said. ASGs represent the government in the Supreme Court and the various high courts and assist the Attorney General and the Solicitor General in defending the government. *—PTI*

Probe on as girl drinks beer inside govt school on video

BILASPUR, 10 SEPT

A video of girl students drinking beer inside a government school in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district surfaced on social media, prompting the education authorities to launch a probe, an official said on Tuesday. The purported video was from the Government Higher Secondary School in Bhatchaura village in the Masturi area and was shot on 29 July, the official said. In the video that went viral on social media, girls could be seen drinking beer and soft drinks, said TR Sahu, District Education Officer (DEO) of Bilaspur. A three-member committee was constituted to probe the alleged incident, and the team recorded the statements of concerned students and teachers on Monday, he said. According to sources, girls celebrated their classmate's birthday inside a classroom on 29 July, and they consumed beer during the party. *—PTI*

Woman molested in Kolkata bus, accused held

KOLKATA, 10 SEPT

A woman was allegedly molested by a fellow passenger inside a moving bus in Kasba area here on Tuesday morning, police said. The incident took place around 9.30 am, when the woman, in her mid-20s, started screaming following which the passengers caught hold of the accused and beat him up, they said. He managed to deboard the bus and tried to flee, but people nearby stopped him and took him to the Kasba Police Station, an officer said. "The woman lodged a complaint at the police station and he was subsequently arrested," he said. The woman was travelling from Kasba to Phoolbagan to her workplace, the officer added. *—PTI*

Alarming: HC raps Kerala for inaction over Hema report

HC asks govt to hand over full report to SIT

KOCHI, 10 SEPT

Kerala High Court on Tuesday pulled up the Left government in the state saying its inaction on the Justice Hema Committee report was "alarming."

A special division bench of Justices AK Jayasankaran Nambiar and CS Sudha said the government got the report years ago and ought to have immediately responded and directed that the full report be handed over to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to take requisite action.

It also asked why the state was silent for so long.

The bench said women are more in number in Kerala and asked what the state was doing about the problems being faced by them in society.

It said the government took action only more than four years after it got the report.

The bench said the SIT can take action based on the report and the court will examine on the next date what steps have been taken by the special team. At the same time, the court also said that the SIT should not act in haste and that the details of the victims and the accused should not be disclosed.

The court also refused to issue any gag order, but said that the media should restrain itself *PHOTO: FB*

The court also refused to issue any gag order, but said that the media should restrain itself and directed the police not to disclose unnecessary details of the cases they are investigating.

The court also said that there should be comprehensive legislation on the issue and directed the government to file an affidavit, indicating steps taken by it, before the next date of hearing on 3 October.

During the hearing, the Advocate General, appearing for the state, said that steps, including constituting an SIT, have been taken and 23 cases have been lodged based on the complaints by female actors.

The Justice Hema Committee was constituted by the Kerala government after the 2017 actress assault case and its report revealing instances of harassment and exploitation of women in the Malayalam cinema industry. *—PTI*

70kg cement blocks kept on track to derail train in Ajmer

JAIPUR, 10 SEPT

An attempt to derail a loaded goods train was made in Rajasthan's Ajmer district by putting two 70kg cement blocks on tracks of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, railway officials said on Tuesday.

The goods train did hit the blocks between Saradhna and Bangad stations on Sunday night but nothing untoward occurred, they said.

"Some miscreants put two cement blocks on tracks on the dedicated freight corridor on Sunday. A goods train hit these," a North Western Railway official said and added the incident happened on the corridor's Phulera-Ahmedabad stretch.

On Monday, an attempt to derail the Bhiwani-Prayagraj Kalindi Express was made in Kanpur by placing an LPG cylinder on tracks, along with a bottle of petrol and matchboxes. Earlier, a bid was made to derail the Ahmedabad-Jodhpur Vande Bharat express in Rajasthan's Pali district.

Talking about the Ajmer incident, a Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation (DFCC) official said a case has been registered and the matter is under investigation.

"The incident occurred on Sunday night. The train's guard informed the control room, and a team of officials along with RPF personnel reached the spot and found the blocks. Movement of trains was not affected," Deputy GM (Security) DFCC Chitresh Joshi said. *—PTI*

Cops inspect the site (left) where one of the cement blocks was allegedly placed on the tracks, in Ajmer *PHOTO: PTI*

NIA joins Bhiwani train derailment attempt probe

KANPUR/LUCKNOW, 10 SEPT

An NIA team has joined the ongoing probe in Kanpur where a major train accident was averted by a loco pilot who brought the Bhiwani-Prayagraj Express to a screeching halt after it hit an LPG cylinder on the tracks on Sunday night, police said.

According to the police, bottles of petrol and matchboxes were also found at the site hinting at a sabotage bid, the reason why a high-level team from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has been rushed in to join the investigations.

ADG Railways has also arrived, a police official confirmed. *—PTI*

'Tails of rockets recovered after drone, missile attacks in Manipur'

IMPHAL, 10 SEPT

Tails of sophisticated rockets have been recovered after recent drone and hi-tech missile attacks in Manipur, a top police officer said on Tuesday.

Manipur Police dismissed the claims of Lt Gen P C Nair, a retired DG of Assam Rifles, in a recent media interview that no drones or rockets have been used in the attacks. He had also labelled Manipur Police as a "Meitei Police", indicating their alleged partisan role in the ethnic strife.

Speaking to reporters, IGP (Administration) K Jayanta Singh said, "The statement is an immature one and seems to be his personal views and not of the force (Assam Rifles). We strongly dismiss it. There is evidence of drone and hi-tech missile attacks. Drones have been recovered. Tails of sophisticated rockets fired on civilian areas have been recovered. Despite such evidence, it is very unfortunate that a distinguished commander would make such statements."

IGP (Operations) I K Muivah said, "We want to clarify on the statement that there is no Manipur Police but Meitei Police or Kuki Police. We want to dismiss that. Manipur Police are composed of different communities including the Nagas, Meiteis, Manipuri Muslims and non-Manipuris. There are Christians, Muslims and Hindus in this force." "The statement that Manipur Police are a Meitei Police shows a myopic kind of mindset," Muivah, who hails from the Tangkhul Naga community, added. *—PTI*

A security personnel during the testing of an anti-drone system in violence-hit Manipur *PHOTO: PTI*

POST ALLEGES CRACKS ON STATUE OF UNITY; FIR FILED

KEVADIA, 10 SEPT

The police have registered a case against an unidentified person after a post on social media platform X claimed that "cracks" have started appearing on the Statue of Unity in Gujarat and it can "fall anytime", an official said on Tuesday.

The 182m-tall statue, built at Kevadia in Narmada district as a tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first home minister of independent India, is a major tourist attraction.

A post written in Hindi on the handle "RaGa4India" at 9.52 am on 8 September stated that the statue "can fall anytime as cracks have started appearing on it".

The post also carried an old photograph of the structure, which appeared to be from the time of its construction. *—PTI*

'NO NEED FOR PANIC'

Mpox patient at LNJP hospital stable: Min

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

The mpox patient admitted at LNJP Hospital here is in a stable condition, Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said on Tuesday.

Bharadwaj conducted a surprise inspection of the hospital to assess preparations for dealing with mpox and dengue.

"There is one confirmed patient of mpox at LNJP hospital. He has a travel history and it's believed that he got infected during his travel abroad," the minister said.

"The patient has been isolated in a separate ward. He is in a stable condition," he added.

The 26-year-old patient, a resident of Haryana's Hisar, has only genital ulcers and skin rashes but no fever, a health department official said. The Union Health Ministry on Monday said that it was an "isolated case" and there was no immediate risk to public. The World Health Organisation (WHO) last month declared mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) for the second time in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Kedarnath landslide: Death toll climbs to 5

RUDRAPRAYAG, 10 SEPT

- As recuse efforts were resumed on Tuesday morning, bodies of four more pilgrims, including three women, were pulled out of the debris

Bodies of four more pilgrims were recovered on Tuesday from the debris of a landslide that occurred on Monday evening on the Kedarnath route, taking the toll in the incident to five, officials said.

More pilgrims could be trapped under the debris, Rudraprayag Police said on Tuesday.

A group of pilgrims returning from a visit to Kedarnath were trapped in the landslide at around 7.20 pm on Monday.

SDRF and NDRF personnel had launched a rescue operation immediately and retrieved one body of a pilgrim identified as Gopal, 50, from Dhar in Madhya Pradesh besides rescuing three others who were rushed to Sonprayag in an ambulance.

The rescue operation had to suspended due to bad weather and boulders still falling from the hillside intermittently on Monday night.

As recuse efforts were resumed on Tuesday morning, bodies of four more pilgrims, including three women, were pulled out of the debris. *—PTI*

Fifth wolf captured in UP, hunt on for 6th

BAHRAICH, 10 SEPT

A fifth wolf was captured on Tuesday as part of the 'Operation Bhediya' campaign that has been ongoing in Bahraich's Mahasi tehsil to catch a pack of six wolves that have killed eight people and injured more than 20 since mid-July, officials said here.

The fifth man-eater wolf was captured using pugmark technique near Ghaghra river close to Harabnspur village, Divisional Forest Officer Ajit Pratap Singh told PTI.

"Now the pack's last wolf, who is lame, is left. It can be alpha wolf (leader of the pack). Till it is caught, the problem might persist. It is hoped that it will also be caught soon," the officer said.

Chief Forest Conservator Renu Singh, however, refuted claims that the remaining wolf is lame. "It is not true," she said, adding that the captured wolf is a female.

According to Ajit Pratap Singh, the forest department team had found wolf footprints in the area on Monday night. However, since the operation could not be carried out at night, four forest department teams arrived in the morning and surrounded the area. The wolf attempted to flee but was trapped in a net laid by the forest department. With the help of villagers, the forest workers managed to capture and cage the wolf, the divisional forest officer said. The forest department team had captured the fourth wolf of the pack on August 29. After that, the remaining wolves likely became cautious and have since evaded capture, the officer said. 'Operation Bhediya', an ongoing campaign since July 17, aims to capture a pack of six wolves that have been terrorising 50 villages in Mahsi tehsil of Bahraich district. *—PTI*

Another wolf, part of a pack which killed several people, was captured by Forest Department, in Bahraich, on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

WATERFALL IN TRAIN

Water leaks from roof of Jabalpur Express

JABALPUR, 10 SEPT

A video has surfaced showing water leakage from the roof of a coach of the Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Express, following which railway authorities said the complaint has been dealt with and action taken against the staff concerned for slack supervision.

The Opposition Congress targeted the government, saying there was a "waterfall facility in the train" for passengers.

In the video, water is seen leaking from a vent on the coach roof.

The clip was shot in the coach of the Jabalpur-Nizamuddin Express (22181) on Monday, West Central Railway's Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Harshit Shrivastava told PTI on Tuesday.

In the video, water is seen dripping from the roof, he noted.

As soon as the information was received, authorities attended to the complaint at Damoh, Sagar (in Madhya Pradesh) and Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh) stations, he said.

After the train reached Hazrat Nizamuddin (in New Delhi), its repair work was being done. The coach will not be used until the repair work is completed, Shrivastava said.

"Action is also being taken against the employee responsible for this," he added.

Meanwhile, Congress also shared the video on its X handle on Monday and said the Railways has given the facility of "waterfall in the train".

Replying to the Congress' post, Jabalpur Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) said, "After receipt of complaint same has been dealt with on utmost priority at DMO and SGO station."

"Staff responsible for slack supervision will be unquestionably taken up under DAR. Once the train reaches NZM, complete repair and maintenance will be done before putting in service," the DRM added. *—PTI*

In the video, water is seen leaking from a vent on the coach roof. *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

50 detained in U'khand after unrest over girl's molestation

DEHRADUN, 10 SEPT

Police on Tuesday detained 50 dubious people from Paltan Bazar area here during a verification drive launched after tension arose between traders of two communities over the alleged molestation of a girl by an employee of a footwear shop recently.

Senior Superintendent of Police Ajai Singh said the drive is being run to verify the identity of those who come from outside the state to work in shops or put up stalls on pushcarts to sell different items in Paltan Bazar area.

A girl went on 7 September to a footwear shop at Paltan Bazar where an employee allegedly molested her while showing shoes to her.

She returned home and complained about it to her parents who along with neighbours reached the police station and filed a complaint.

Acting on the complaint, the police arrested the accused named Umer, 24.

Umer originally hails from Budgera village in Kiratpur area of Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh one community closed its shops in Paltan Bazar on Monday in protest against alleged beating of the accused.

Angered by this, people of the other community also closed their shops raising the issue of women's safety. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

PROTECTING VOLCANO

An idol of 700-year old Lord Ganesha sits at the edge of a volcano in Mount Bromo, Indonesia. The idol is said to have mega powers as people believe that it protects them from the volcano eruptions. It is claimed that the idol was installed by the ancestors of the Tengger massif tribe. The Tenggerese people are a sub-ethnic group of Javanese in eastern Java who claim to be the descendants of the Majapahit princes

PHOTO: X/@VARSHAPARMA

UN Chief says Gaza strikes are worst he's seen in 7 yrs

The UN chief said on Monday that the United Nations has offered to monitor any cease-fire in Gaza and demanded an end to the worst death and destruction he has seen in his more than seven-year tenure.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in an interview with The Associated Press that it's "unrealistic" to think the UN could play a role in Gaza's future, either by administering the territory or providing a peacekeeping force, because Israel is unlikely to accept a UN role.

But he said "the UN will be available to support any cease-fire". The United Nations has had a military monitoring mission in the Middle East, known as UNTSO, since 1948, and "from our side, this was one of the hypotheses that we've put on the table", he said.

"Of course, we'll be ready to do whatever the international community asked for us," Guterres said. "The question is whether the parties would accept it, and in particular whether Israel would accept it." Israel's military assault on Gaza, triggered by Hamas' attacks in southern Israel on October 7, has stretched for 11 months, with recent cease-fire talks failing to reach a breakthrough and violence in the West Bank reaching new highs.

Stressing the urgency of a cease-fire now, Guterres said: "The level of suffering we are witnessing in Gaza is unprecedented in my mandate as secretary-general of the United Nations. I've never seen such a level of death and destruction as we are seeing in Gaza in the last few months."

The war has killed over 40,900 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry, part of Gaza's Hamas government, does not differentiate between fighters and civilians in its count though it says about half of the dead have been women and children. Israel says at least 17,000 militants are among the dead.

The war has killed over 40,900 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry ***PHOTO: PTI***

The war has caused vast destruction and displaced around 90 per cent of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people, often multiple times.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government have accused the UN of being anti-Israel and have been highly critical of UN humanitarian operations in Gaza, including accusing UN workers of collaborating with Hamas. He also has voiced scepticism about peacekeeping missions, saying only Israel can protect itself.

Facing protests at home and increasing urgency from allies, Netanyahu has pushed back against pressure for a cease-fire deal and declared "no one will preach to me".

Looking beyond an agreement, Guterres stressed that a two-state solution to the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not only viable, "it's the only solution".

United States and others support Palestinian in lands captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, but Netanyahu, who is leading the most conservative government in Israel's history, has opposed calls for a two-state solution.

Guterres asked rhetorically whether the alternative is viable.

"It means that you have 5 million Palestinians living there without any rights in a state," he said. "Is it possible? Can we accept an idea similar to what we had in South Africa in the past?"

He was referring to South Africa's apartheid system from 1948 until the early 1990s when its minority white population marginalised and segregated people of colour, especially Black people.

The Palestinians have circulated a draft UN resolution demanding that Israel end its "unlawful presence" in Gaza and the West Bank within six months. The proposed General Assembly resolution follows a ruling by the top United Nations court in July that said Israel's presence in the Palestinian territories is unlawful and must end.

In the wide-ranging interview, the UN chief painted a grim global picture, saying, "Our world is in total disarray — I would say in total chaos".

Conflicts are spreading and the most dramatic ones like Ukraine and Gaza have no end in sight, he said. Climate change is having devastating effects and artificial intelligence is developing without serious guardrails.

At the same time, Guterres said, "we see dramatic inequalities" and developing countries struggling, many submerged in debt and without resources to educate their children and or provide basic infrastructure.

The secretary-general has invited world leaders to a summit in the days before their annual high-level meeting at the UN General Assembly later this month to recommit to working together to meet those challenges and reform multilateral institutions established after World War II, including the UN.

Guterres said Ukraine's recent incursion into Russia's Kursk region shows that the war, now in its third year, will not end quickly or easily.

The secretary-general also said UN humanitarian operations are in crisis because needs have increased dramatically "with the proliferation of conflicts, proliferation of natural disasters, with climate change moving fast". But funding has not.

Unfortunately, the priorities of the world's leaders "do not correspond to the real needs of humankind at the present moment", he said. *—PTI*

LETTERS

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SALAR سالار

People are to be blamed for soaring methane pollution

The amount and proportion of the powerful heat-trapping gas methane that humans spew into the atmosphere is rising, helping to turbocharge climate change, a new study finds.

Tuesday's study finds that in 2020, the last year complete data is available, the world put 670 million tons (608 million metric tons) of methane in the air, up nearly 12 per cent from 2000. An even more significant finding in the study in Environmental Research Letters was the source of those emissions: those from humans jumped almost 18 per cent in two decades, while natural emissions, mostly from wetlands, inched up just 2 per cent in the same time.

Methane levels in the air are now 2.6 times higher than in pre-industrial times, the study said. Methane levels in the air had plateaued for a while in the early 2000s, but now are soaring. Humans cause methane emissions by burning fossil fuels, engaging in large-scale agriculture and filling up landfills.

"Methane is a climate menace that the world is ignoring," study lead author Rob Jackson, head of the Global Carbon Project, which is a group of scientists who monitor greenhouse gas emissions yearly. "Methane has risen far more and much faster than carbon dioxide."

Carbon dioxide is still the biggest threat, said Jackson, a Stanford University climate scientist. Humans, mostly through the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, put 60 times more carbon dioxide in the air than methane and it lasts thousands of years.

Because methane leave the atmosphere in about a decade, it's a powerful "lever" that humans can use to fight climate change, Jackson said. That's because cutting it could yield relatively quick benefits.

In 2000, 60 per cent of the methane spewed into the air came from direct human activity. Now it's 65 per cent, the study found.

"It's a very worrying paper, but actually not a big surprise unfortunately," said climate scientist Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics, who wasn't part of the research. He said for the world to keep warming to an agreed-upon limit of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, the world needs to cut carbon dioxide emissions nearly in half and methane by more than one-third.

But Jackson said the current trend with methane emissions has the world on target for warming of 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit), twice the goal of the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

Jackson's study mostly focused on where the methane is coming from, both by location and source.

Geographically, everywhere but Europe is increasing in human-caused methane emissions, with large jumps in Asia, especially China and India, Jackson said.

In the last 20 years, methane emissions from coal mining, oil and gas have jumped 33 per cent, while landfill and waste increased 20 per cent and agriculture emissions rose 14 per cent, according to the study. The biggest single human-connected source of emissions are cows, Jackson said.

Cornell University climate scientist Robert Howarth faulted the study for not sufficiently emphasizing methane emissions from the boom in shale gas drilling, known as fracking. He said that boom began in 2005 and coincided with a sharp rise in methane emissions, including a spike of about 13 million tons (11.7 million metric tons) in the United States alone since then.

Jackson said the rise in natural methane from tropical wetlands was triggered by warmer temperatures that caused microbes to spew more gas. He called it disturbing because "we don't have any way of reducing" those emissions.

In 2021, countries promised to do something about methane, but it's not working yet, Jackson said.

Though Jackson's data runs only through 2020, he said global monitoring of methane levels in the air show that "we know that concentrations in the last four or five years rose faster than at any time in the instrument record. So that alone tells us that the global methane pledge is not having a substantive effect on methane emissions and concentrations," he said.

University of Victoria climate scientist Andrew Weaver, who wasn't part of the research, said, "we have a lot more work to do if we want to avoid the most dire consequences of global warming." *—PTI*

Methane levels in the air had plateaued in the early 2000s, but now are soaring. Humans cause methane emissions by burning fossil fuels, large-scale agriculture and landfills ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

B'deshis search for their kin who disappeared during Hasina's rule

For Michael Chakma, a Bangladeshi Indigenous rights activist, each day of his five-year detention in a secret prison allegedly run by the country's military intelligence was harrowing and filled with unending despair.

"There was no window and I had no way to tell time, or whether it was day or night. I was in a dark, enclosed space, and when the light was turned on, it was too bright for me to see properly," the 45-year-old told Al Jazeera. "Most of the time, I was handcuffed and shackled."

Chakma was among more than 700 persons, including top opposition figures and activists, who were forcibly disappeared by Bangladeshi authorities during the 15-year "autocratic" regime of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from January 2009 and June 2024, according to Odhikar, a prominent NGO.

Of these, 83 victims were later found dead, with some reportedly killed in "crossfire" with security forces, while more than 150 individuals remain missing.

Hasina was forced to resign and flee to neighbouring India in July after millions of Bangladeshis, led by university students, launched a nationwide movement to demand her ouster.

'Thought they will kill me'

Chakma was picked up by armed men near capital Dhaka in April 2019 allegedly for his criticism of the Hasina government's policy on the Chakmas, the largest among Bangladesh's Indigenous groups, who mainly live in the so-called Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in southeastern Bangladesh.

The Chakmas are mostly Buddhist and have for decades been resisting a takeover of their land by Bengali settlers in the CHT region. Studies show the Chakma population in CHT came down from 91 percent in 1959 to 51 percent in 1991, as the successive governments backed the settlers, leading to an uprising by the Chakmas in the 1980s. Dhaka's military response to the uprising saw gross human rights violations against the Chakmas, including widespread arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

But Chakma was among many in his community who continued to criticise the 1997 deal, mainly over the army's ongoing presence in the CHT region. He was abducted, allegedly by security forces, in 2019.

For five years, Chakma was in a solitary confinement where, he said, he feared he would never see daylight again and would die in the small cell.

Family members of the missing people attended a demonstration in Dhaka ***PHOTO: AL JAZEERA***

Last month, however, Chakma was suddenly removed from his cell. He did not know why. "I was terrified. I thought they were going to kill me," he said.

Blindfolded and restrained, he was put in a car and driven all night, as he remained consumed by the thoughts of his imminent death. "I was whispering to myself: 'They're going to kill me, they're going to kill me,'" he said, dreading a staged "crossfire" execution – a method he had long opposed during his activism for Chakma rights.

When he finally opened his eyes, he found himself surrounded by teakwood trees. Feeling numb and struggling to process his sudden freedom, he wandered in the darkness, uncertain of his location, until he spotted a signpost that said: "Chattogram Forest Division". Chittagong was renamed as Chattogram in 2018, but the CHT retains the old name.

'The House of Mirrors'

Since Hasina's fall, at least three victims of enforced disappearances have been returned to their families, including Chakma. The other two are children of prominent leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh's largest Muslim party banned by Hasina in 2013 for supporting the Pakistani forces during the country's liberation war in 1971. The ban was lifted last month by the Yunus-led interim government.

Local media reports say Chakma, Azmi and Quasem were detained in Aynaghar ("House of Mirrors"), a notorious network of secret prisons operated by the military intelligence. These prisons were first revealed in 2022 when Netra News, a Sweden-based investigative website, interviewed two of its former detainees. Mubashar Hasan, a researcher in the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Oslo, was also held in the same prison for 44 days after his abduction in 2017 from Dhaka. He said the clandestine facilities functioned like fully-operational prisons.

'Lucky that I am alive'

Quasem, a lawyer, was picked up by plainclothed police in 2016 and kept in a windowless room, shackled. The constant hum of a large exhaust fan drowned out any sound from outside, he told Al Jazeera.

Like Chakma, Quasem was also released in the dead of the night, instructed to keep the blindfold for half an hour. He was dropped off near a highway in Dhaka, from where he walked for an hour until he stumbled upon a charity clinic his father had once been a trustee of.

A staff member at the clinic recognised him and quickly informed his family, which rushed to reunite with him. "I am feeling lucky that I am alive," he said.

'Grave injustices'

While Chakma and Quasem are back with their loved ones, many families of the forcibly disappeared persons continue to wait for any information about their relatives.

On August 10, Mayer Daak, a rights group dedicated to combating enforced disappearances in Bangladesh, submitted a list of 158 missing persons to the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), the military intelligence headquarters.

Among those still missing is Ataur Rahman, a member of the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), who was abducted from Dhaka in 2011. His wife, Nadira Sultana, and their children continue to await his return.

Sultana joined other family members of the disappeared in a protest outside the DGFI headquarters in Dhaka on August 11, demanding information about her husband.

—Al Jazeera

Israeli strike on Gaza tent camp kills at least 40

Israel says its forces unintentionally killed an American activist

DEIR AL-BALAH, 10 SEPT

An Israeli strike on a crowded tent camp housing Palestinians displaced by the war in Gaza killed at least 40 people and wounded 60 others early Tuesday, Palestinian officials said. Israel said it targeted "significant" Hamas militants and disputed the death toll.

It was among the deadliest strikes yet in Muwasi, a sprawl of crowded tent camps along the Gaza coast that Israel designated as a humanitarian zone for hundreds of thousands of civilians to seek shelter from the Israel-Hamas war.

Gaza's Civil Defence said its first responders recovered 40 bodies from the strike and were still looking for people. It said entire families were killed in their tents.

An Associated Press camera operator saw three large craters at the scene, where first responders and displaced people were sifting through the sand and rubble with garden tools and their bare hands by the light of mobile phones. They pulled body parts from the sand, including what appeared to be a human leg.

Palestinians inspect the damage at a tent area in the courtyard of Al Aqsa Martyrs hospital in Gaza on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Attaf al-Shaar, who was displaced from the southern city of Rafah, said the strike happened just after midnight and caused a fire. "The people were buried in the sand. They were retrieved as body parts," she told an Associated Press reporter at the scene.

Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, one of three hospitals to receive casualties, said around two dozen bodies were brought in from the strike.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesperson, disputed the reported number of casualties in a post on the platform X, saying the reports "do not line up with the information available to the (Israeli army), the precise weapons used and the accuracy of the strike."

The war has caused vast destruction and displaced around 90 per cent of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, often multiple times. Aid groups have struggled to provide even basic services in Muwasi, and Israel has occasionally struck targets there despite designating it as a humanitarian zone. Gaza's Health Ministry says over 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since the war began. It does not differentiate between fighters and civilians in its count.

The Israeli military said Tuesday that an American activist who was killed in the West Bank last week was likely shot "indirectly and unintentionally" by Israeli forces who were aiming at someone else. *—AP*

Aus proposes min age for kids using social media

MELBOURNE, 10 SEPT

The Australian government on Tuesday promised to legislate this year to enforce a minimum age for children to access social media, but it has yet to announce how ages will be verified.Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the government would soon trial age verification technology with a view to banning children from opening social media accounts. The line would be drawn between the ages of 14 and 16. Several countries and US states are attempting to legislate to spare children harm from social media, including bullying. The Australian move comes as parents increasing call for their children to be protected online and with the opposition party promising a social media ban for children under 16 if it wins elections due by May next year. *—AP*

Pope's Mass in East Timor draws 6,00,000 people

TASITOLU, 10 SEPT

An estimated 6,00,000 people — a figure nearing half of East Timor's population — packed a seaside park Tuesday for Pope Francis' final Mass, held on the same field where St. John Paul II prayed during the nation's fight for independence from Indonesia. While other papal Masses have drawn millions of people in more populous countries and there were certainly other nationalities attending Tuesday's Mass, the crowd in small East Timor was believed to represent the biggest turnout for a papal event ever, in terms of the proportion of the population. *—AP*

PHOTO: PTI

Amitav shortlisted for British Academy Book Prize

LONDON, 10 SEPT

Renowned Indian author Amitav Ghosh was on Tuesday shortlisted for the British Academy Book Prize for Global Cultural Understanding 2024, a leading international non-fiction prize worth GBP 25,000 now in its 12th year. Ghosh's 'Smoke and Ashes: Opium's Hidden Histories' is in the running along with five other international titles for the prize open to authors of any nationality based anywhere in the world and working in any language, provided that the nominated work is available in the English language. The Kolkata-born author, who is based in the US, was hailed by the judges for his "storytelling skills to bring to life this highly readable travelogue, memoir and history". *—PTI*

AMID ECONOMIC CRISIS

Pak faces severe education crisis with over 26M children out of school

ISLAMABAD, 10 SEPT

Pakistan's Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training informed Pakistan's National Assembly that more than 26 million children are still out of school across the country, Dawn reported.

It said that number continues to remain above 26 million despite measures taken by the government in recent years as well as commitments to bring these children back to schools.

In response to a question by Pakistan's Member of National Assembly Shahida Rehmani, Education Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui gave a written reply on Monday, which was not debated in the lower house, Dawn reported.

It said 26.20 million out-of-school children include about 10 million children (10,774,890) in the age group of 5-9 years, about five million (4,935,484) in the age group of 10-12 years and 4.5 million in the age group of 13-14 years. Additionally, six million students, from 13-16 years of age, are out of school and deprived of higher secondary education.

26.20 million out-of-school children include about 10 million children in the age group of 5-9 years *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

Top leaders of Imran's party arrested outside Parl

Top leaders of former jailed prime minister Imran Khan were arrested by Pakistani police on Monday from outside Parliament House following a National Assembly session, according to media reports.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party leaders Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Sher Afzal Khan Marwat, and Advocate Shoaib Shaheen were arrested by Islamabad police, police spokesperson Jawad Taqi was quoted as saying by Dawn newspaper. *—ANI/ PTI*

China's drug regulator clears mpox vaccine

BEIJING, 10 SEPT

China's top drug regulator has cleared a mpox vaccine developed by local drug firm Sinopharm for clinical trials which could be the country's first experimental dose to battle the deadly disease.

The domestic vaccine candidate, created by the Shanghai Institute of Biological Products and administered by Sinopharm, is expected to play an important role in preventing and controlling mpox infections, the company said in a statement released on Monday afternoon.

There is currently no approved mpox vaccine in China. Globally, a few vaccines have been approved in the United States, Canada, the European Union, Japan and Russia. In China, a vaccine candidate typically goes through three phases of clinical trials before gaining market approval.

The process can take years, even decades. However, the National Medical Products Administration, China's top drug regulator, has launched a number of accelerated or streamlined channels to facilitate applications of novel drugs and vaccines or those in urgent need, state-run China Daily reported on Tuesday.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

According to the company, the new vaccine is a replication-deficient vaccine based on a strain called MVA. The description is the same as Jynneos, the world's first mpox vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the United States in 2019.

Previously, in July 2022, the WHO declared a global emergency but then lifted it in May last year because of a sustained decline in international cases. *—PTI*

NASA to study Jupiter moon's underground ocean

CAPEW CANAVERAL, 10 SEPT

NASA on Monday approved next month's launch to Jupiter's moon Europa after reviewing the spacecraft's ability to withstand the intense radiation there.

Questions about the reliability of the transistors on the Europa Clipper spacecraft arose earlier this year after similar problems cropped up elsewhere. With the tight launch window looming, NASA rushed to conduct tests to verify that the electronic parts could survive the $5 billion mission to determine whether the suspected ocean beneath Europa's icy crust might be suitable for life.

Liftoff remains scheduled for Oct. 10 aboard a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket. NASA has three weeks to launch the spacecraft before standing down for more than a year to await another proper planetary alignment; the spacecraft needs to swing past Mars and then Earth for gravity assists. Project manager Jordan Evans said the transistors — located in circuits across the entire spacecraft — are expected to degrade when Europa Clipper is exposed to the worst of the radiation during the 49 flybys of the moon. But they should recover during the three weeks between each encounter, said Evans of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

PHOTO: NASA

- NASA rushed to conduct tests to verify that the electronic parts could survive the $5 billion mission to determine whether the suspected ocean beneath Europa's icy crust might be suitable for life

Teams from labs across the country came to that conclusion following round-the-clock testing over the past four months. The project has "high confidence we can complete the original mission for exploring Europa as planned," Evans said. "We are ready for Jupiter." *—AP*

MANY INJURED

Over 140 Ukrainian drones target Russia, say officials

A woman died and three people were injured in the town of Ramenskoye *PHOTO: PTI*

MOSCOW, 10 SEPT

Over 140 Ukrainian drones targeted multiple Russian regions overnight, including Moscow and surrounding areas, killing at least one person, officials said Tuesday, in one of the biggest drone attacks on Russian soil in the 2 1/2-year war.

A woman died and three people were injured in the town of Ramenskoye, just outside Moscow, where drones hit two multistory residential buildings and started fires, Moscow region Gov. Andrei Vorobyov said. Five residential buildings were evacuated due to falling drone debris, Vorobyov said.

The attack also prompted the authorities to temporarily shut down three airports just outside Moscow — Vnukovo, Domodedovo and Zhukovsky. A total of 48 flights were diverted to other airports, according to Russia's civil aviation authority, Rosaviatsia.

It was the second massive Ukrainian drone attack on Russia this month. On 1 September, the Russian military said it intercepted 158 Ukrainian drones over more than a dozen Russian regions in what Russian media described as the biggest Ukrainian drone barrage since the start of the war.

Russia's Investigative Committee announced a criminal investigation into what it described as a terror attack.

Ukrainian officials have complained that weapons pledged by the country's Western partners fall short of what the Ukrainian military needs and commonly arrive long after they were promised.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has urged defence companies to increase their output. On the battlefield's 1,000-kilometre front line, Ukrainian troops are up against Russia's larger and better-equipped army.

The two sides are especially contesting parts of eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region, fighting over towns and villages that are bombed-out wrecks, while Ukraine last month launched a bold incursion into Russia's Kursk border region. *—AP*

DEATH TOLL FROM VIETNAM STORM RISES TO 87

HANOI, 10 SEPT

The death toll in Vietnam from Typhoon Yagi and subsequent heavy rain that triggered floods and landslides climbed to 87 on Tuesday, with 70 people missing and hundreds injured, state media said.

Typhoon Yagi was the strongest typhoon to hit Vietnam in decades when it made landfall Saturday with winds of up to 149 kph. It killed nine people and then weakened Sunday, but downpours continued. Vietnamese state broadcaster VTV reported that 87 people are confirmed dead and 70 remain missing. Most of the deaths were caused by flooding and landslides, it said.

Water levels in several rivers, including the Red River that flows through the capital, Hanoi, were dangerously high. Authorities evacuated families living close to the river in Hanoi on Tuesday. On Monday, a bridge collapsed and a bus was swept away, while factories in northern provinces like Haiphong were damaged. *—AP*

Wildfires rage, Amazon falls to record low level in Brazil

BRASILIA, 10 SEPT

Brazil is enduring its worst drought since nationwide measurements began over seven decades ago, with 59 per cent of the country under stress — an area roughly half the size of the US.

Major Amazon basin rivers are registering historic lows, and uncontrolled manmade wildfires have ravaged protected areas and spread smoke over a vast expanse, plummeting air quality.

"This is the first time that a drought has covered all the way from the North to the country's Southeast," Ana Paula Cunha, a researcher at the National Center for Monitoring and Early Warning of Natural Disasters, said in a statement Thursday. "It is the most intense and widespread drought in history."

Smoke on Monday afternoon caused Sao Paulo, a metropolitan area of 21 million people, to breathe the second most polluted air in the world after Lahore, Pakistan, according to data gathered by IQAir, a Swiss air technology company. About 1,100 kilometres to the north, a wildfire is sweeping through Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park, one of Brazil's most famous tourism sites.

- Smoke caused Sao Paulo, an area of 21 million people, to breathe the second most polluted air in the world after Lahore, Pakistan, according to data gathered by IQAir

On Monday, there was one uncontrolled wildfire in a remote area. A helicopter was expected to arrive to transport firefighters. Another fire was controlled by 80 firefighters, with support from two aircraft. Two other fires were threatening to enter the park.

The blazes in one of the few protected areas of Cerrado, the Brazilian savanna, are just the latest drama in the country beset by months of blazes. From the beginning of the year until Sept. 8, Brazil registered almost 160,000 fires, the worst year since 2010. In Pantanal, the world's largest wetland area, it has been the second worst fire year on record. *—AP*

5-DAY MISSION

SpaceX conducts 1st private spacewalk

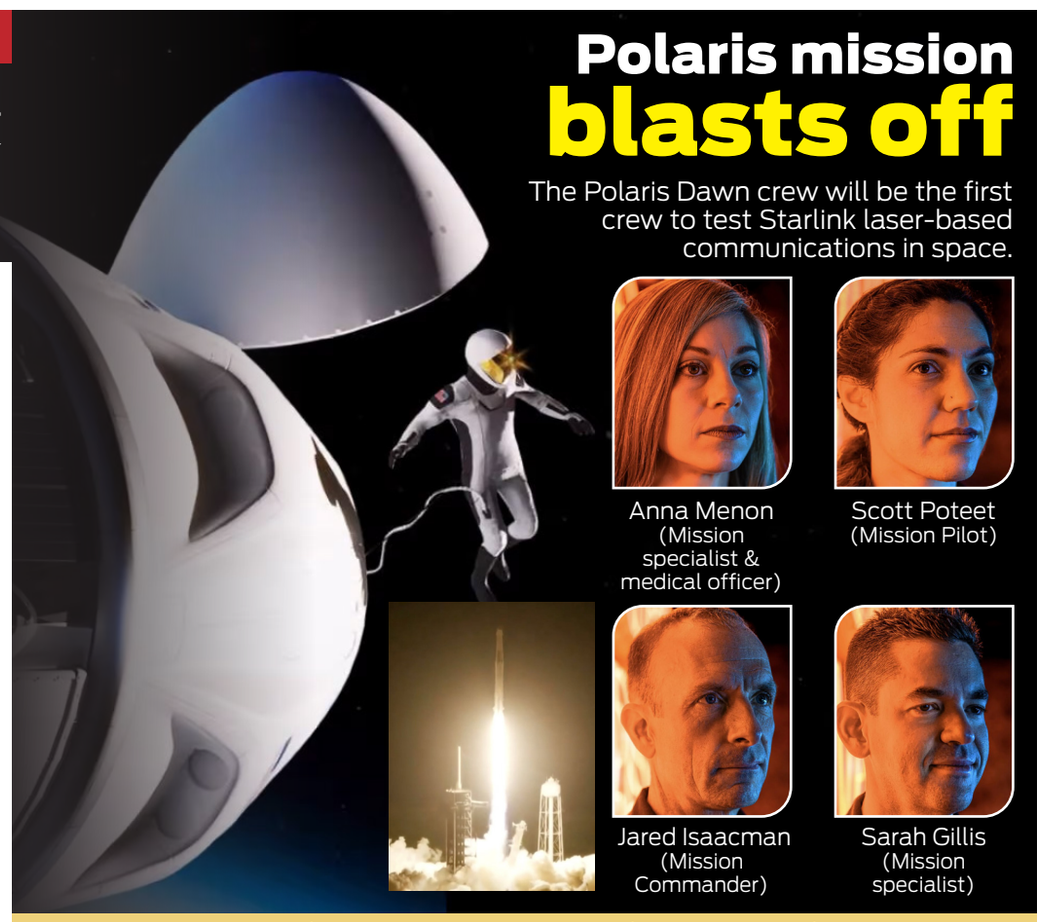
FLORID, 10 SEPT

Four astronauts have blasted out of the atmosphere as part of a privately funded five-day mission that aims to carry out the first commercial spacewalk.

Unlike his previous chartered flight, tech entrepreneur Jared Isaacman shared the cost with SpaceX this time around, which included developing and testing brand new spacesuits to see how they'll hold up in the harsh vacuum.

If all goes as planned, it will be the first time private citizens conduct a spacewalk, but they won't venture away from the capsule. Considered one of the most riskiest parts of spaceflight, spacewalks have been the sole realm of professional astronauts since the former Soviet Union popped open the hatch in 1965, closely followed by the US. Today, they are routinely done at the International Space Station. Isaacman, along with a pair of SpaceX engineers and a former Air Force Thunderbirds pilot, launched before dawn aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Florida. The spacewalk is scheduled for late Wednesday or Thursday, midway through the five-day flight. But first the passengers are shooting for way beyond the International Space Station — an altitude of 1,400 kilometres, which would surpass the Earth-lapping record set during NASA's Project Gemini in 1966. Only the 24 Apollo astronauts who flew to the moon have ventured farther.

All four wore SpaceX's spacewalking suits because the entire Dragon capsule will be depressurized for the two-hour spacewalk, exposing everyone to the dangerous environment. Isaacman and SpaceX's Sarah Gillis will take turns briefly popping out of the hatch. *—AP*



Gold rallies ₹600; silver jumps by ₹700

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Gold prices rallied by Rs 600 to Rs 74,100 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday on the back of fresh buying from jewellers. In the previous session, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 73,500 per 10 grams on Monday. Silver prices, too, jumped Rs 700 to Rs 84,500 per kilogram from Rs 83,800 per kg in the previous close, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity bounced Rs 400 to Rs 73,750 per 10 grams. It had settled at Rs 73,350 per 10 grams in the previous session. In the overseas markets, comex gold is trading lower at USD 2,532.10 per ounce. However, silver is quoting marginally higher at USD 28.70 per ounce globally.—*PTI*

Rupee falls 2 paise to close at 83.97 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 10 SEPT

The rupee traded in a narrow range on Tuesday and depreciated 2 paise to close at 83.97 (provisional) against the American currency, weighed down by the strengthening of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said the US dollar recovered amid mixed non-farm payrolls data. The slight recovery in crude oil prices also weighed on the rupee. However, a surge in the domestic markets cushioned the downside. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.95 against the American currency and finally settled at 83.97 (provisional) against the US dollar, down 2 paise from its previous close. —*PTI*

Tata, Singapore firm sign pact for semiconductor infra

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Tata Electronics has signed a pact with ASMPT Singapore for establishing semiconductor assembly equipment infrastructure and solutions for its chip packaging units in Assam and Karnataka. ASMPT will collaborate with Tata Electronics for workforce training, advancing service engineering infrastructure, automation, spare supports and boosting R&D initiatives in the area of wirebond, flip chip, advanced packaging and integrated system packaging. Tata Electronics is setting up a chip assembly plant in Assam with an investment of Rs 27,000 crore which is expected to become operational next year. It also has a small chip assembly unit set-up in Karnataka. The partnership shall also focus on energy and material efficiency to promote sustainable growth and strengthen the semiconductor supply chain ecosystem. —*PTI*

Market climbs on rally in US trade, int'l fund inflows

Sensex up by 361.75 points; Nifty surges by 104.70 points

MUMBAI, 10 SEPT

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended higher on Tuesday, marking their second straight day of gains following a rebound in the US markets and fresh foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 361.75 points or 0.44 per cent to settle at 81,921.29 driven by gains in IT, telecom and select banking shares. During the day, it jumped 637.01 points or 0.78 per cent to 82,196.55.

The NSE Nifty surged 104.70 points or 0.42 per cent to 25,041.10.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid, Axis Bank, Tata Consultancy Services and Adani Ports were the biggest gainers.

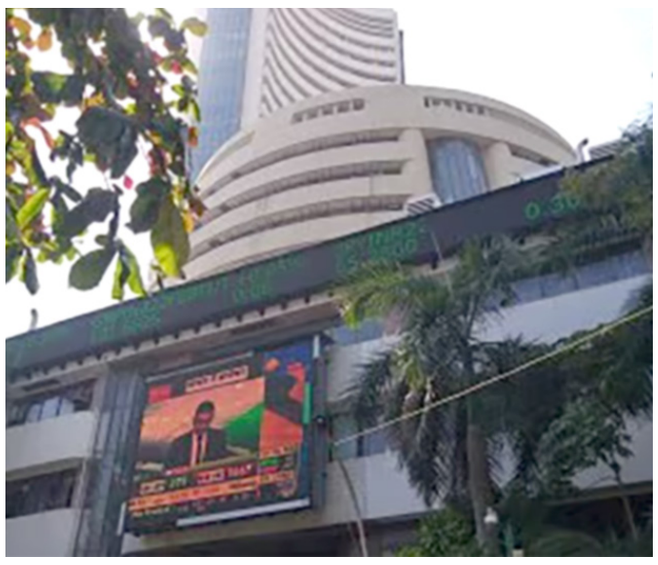
Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors and State Bank of India were among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,176.55 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought equities worth Rs 1,757.02 crore.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.39 per cent to USD 70.84 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark Sensex rebounded 375.61 points or 0.46 per cent to settle at 81,559.54 on Monday.

The NSE Nifty went up by 84.25 points or 0.34 per cent to finish at 24,936.40 after three days of fall. —*PTI*



Among the 30 Sensex firms, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Adani Ports were biggest gainers **PHOTO: PTI**

ASIAN MKT ON EDGE AS INVESTORS EYE INFLATION DATA

TOKYO, 10 SEPT

Asian shares were trading mixed Tuesday after a rally on Wall Street that regained some of the losses from the market's worst week in nearly a year and a half.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose nearly 0.2 per cent in afternoon trading to 36,282.25. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.4 per cent to 8,021.10, while South Korea's Kospi lost 0.3 per cent to 2,529.02. Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 0.4 per cent to 17,270.12. The Shanghai Composite declined 0.2 per cent to 2,729.86.

Investor attention is now turning to the latest monthly updates on inflation at the consumer and wholesale levels that will be released later in the week.

Apple's stock was virtually flat after the company unveiled its latest iPhone model, the 16. —*PTI*

NEW REGULATIONS

Free 20km travel on highways for vehicles with GNSS

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Owners of private vehicles equipped with a functional Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) will not be charged any amount for travelling up to 20 km on highways and expressways per day, according to a notification.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on Tuesday amended the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008.

Under the new regulations, known as the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Amendment Rules, 2024, fees will now be charged on the actual distance travelled if the distance exceeds 20 kilometres.

"A driver, owner or person in charge of a mechanical vehicle other than a National Permit vehicle who makes use of the same section of the national highway, permanent bridge, bypass or tunnel, as the case may be, shall be levied a zero-user fee upto 20 kilometres of a journey in each direction in a day under Global Navigation Satellite System based user fee collection system," the notification said. The road ministry in July had said it has decided to initially implement a GNSS-based toll collection system at select national highways on a pilot basis as an added facility along with FASTag.

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had said that a pilot study with regard to a GNSS-based user fee collection system has been done on the Bengaluru-Mysore section of NH-275 in Karnataka and Panipat-Hisar section of NH-709 in Haryana. —*PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Adani's new 'aviio' app to give flyers real-time data

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Adani Airports Holdings Ltd, the Adani group firm that operates seven airports in the country, has launched 'aviio' digital platform to provide passengers real-time data on variety of airport accesses - from wait times to gate change and bags on belt.

Aviio aspires to bring the aviation community together to collaborate and serve passengers better, a top official said.

By enabling airport stakeholders to access real-time data, passengers can expect easier access to airport information in the form of updates related to security checks, wait times, gate change and bags on belt, among other aspects, he said.

With this path-breaking initiative, AAHL, a subsidiary of Adani group's flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd, aims to serve the aviation community and set new standards for airport operations management and passenger experience.

With seven operational airports in its stable, and one more expected to go live during the middle of 2025, this platform for B2B services has been conceptualised and curated to meet AAHL's unique need to manage airports at scale.

CISF personnel, manning the airports, would be provided smartphones, with the app installed, to ensure collaboration with all entities. —*PTI*

Gautam Adani **PHOTO: PTI**

'FOCUS ON CLEAN MOBILITY'

PM asks automakers to bring global best practices to India

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asked the automotive industry to bring global best practices to India, while also working on green and clean mobility.

In a written address to the annual convention of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), Modi said the automotive industry will drive even higher economic growth and in turn, thrive on demand growth.

"As we shift gears towards our collective goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, I am confident that organisations like SIAM will continue to bring together all stakeholders and become a force multiplier in this mission," he said.

The prime minister said the road ahead demands that the country's progress is rapid, while also being sustainable.

"Working (on) greener and cleaner mobility is a vital step in this direction. It is important that this climate-conscious and sustainable vision resonates with domestic and international partners," he asserted.

He further said, "Through innovation and enterprise, I am sure that the automotive industry will drive even higher economic growth and in turn, thrive on the demand growth that inevitably creates."

He said over the last decade, India's automotive sector has witnessed tremendous and unprecedented growth. "This is as much a testament to our nation's expanding economic growth, as it is to the pivotal role played by the automotive industry," Modi said.

The success story of Indian mobility is noteworthy. The nation is witnessing the creation of future-ready infrastructure, such as state-of-the-art expressways, high-speed railways and other forms of multi-modal connectivity that reaches every corner, the prime minister noted. —*PTI*

Narendra Modi **PHOTO: PTI**

Mutual funds grow 3%; debt flow plunges to 62%

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Equity mutual funds continued their robust momentum in August attracting Rs 38,239 crore driven by strong contributions from thematic schemes. The quantum of net inflow was 3 per cent higher from Rs 37,113 crore logged in July.

However, flow in the segment was less compared to Rs 18,386 crore in July and Rs 22,352 crore in June.

With these inflows, the industry's net assets under management rose to an all-time high of Rs 66.7 lakh crore in August-end from Rs 65 lakh crore in July-end

Debt-oriented schemes experienced net inflows of Rs 45,169 crore in August, which was 62 per cent lower than Rs 1.2 lakh crore seen in the preceding month. —*PTI*

TN signs ₹2,600 crore investment pacts with US

CHENNAI, 10 SEPT

Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday said it has signed investment pacts worth over Rs 2,600 crore with American companies during the ongoing US visit of state Chief Minister MK Stalin.

In the presence of CM Stalin in the US city of Chicago on September 9, the government signed MoUs with Jabil and Rockwell Automation for investments of Rs 2,666 crore, creating 5,365 jobs, an official release said here.

The release said Jabil is a leading provider of electronics manufacturing services and solutions to major companies such as Apple, Cisco, HP and Dell. It has manufacturing units in China, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, and the US.

Further, the government signed a pact with Rockwell Automation, one of the world's largest companies in industrial automation. —*PTI*

'IT SECTOR TO SEE WEAK GROWTH'

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

The Indian IT services industry is likely to register a second consecutive year of muted revenue growth, estimated at 4-6 per cent in FY2025, but the operating profit is expected to be healthy, according to ICRA.

The persisting challenges and tepid topline growth notwithstanding, ICRA has forecast the industry's operating profit margin (OPM) at a healthy about 22 per cent in FY2025, with attrition levels having declined considerably and seen stabilising over the near term.

Despite expectations of continued subdued growth, ICRA has maintained its "stable outlook" on the Indian IT services industry, led by a well-established business position, expectation of healthy earnings and cash flow generation, and strong balance sheets of sector players. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

PN Gadgil IPO gets full subscription on day 1

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

The initial public offer of jewellery retail chain PN Gadgil Jewellers Ltd got fully subscribed within a few hours of opening for bidding on Tuesday and ended the day with a two-time subscription.

The Rs 1,100 crore initial share sale received bids for 3,38,86,720 shares against 1,68,85,964 shares on offer, translating into 2.01 times subscription, according to the NSE data.

The portion for non-institutional investors got booked 3.26 times and the quota for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) received 2.61 times subscription. The Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) part got subscribed 1 per cent.

PN Gadgil Jewellers Ltd on Monday said it has raised Rs 330 crore from anchor investors.

At present, SVG Business Trust holds a 99.9 per cent stake in PN Gadgil Jewellers.

The initial public offering (IPO) will conclude on 12 September. The price band for the offer has been fixed at Rs 456-480 per share. —*PTI*

EU COURT WINS BIG

EU court rejects Apple's appeal, asks firm to pay $13B euro tax to Ireland

LONDON, 10 SEPT

The European Union's top court on Tuesday rejected Apple's final legal challenge against an order from the bloc's executive commission to repay 13 billion euros in back taxes to Ireland, bringing an end to the long-running dispute.

The European Court of Justice overruled a lower court's earlier decision in the case, saying it "confirms the European Commission's 2016 decision: Ireland granted Apple unlawful aid which Ireland is required to recover."

The case drew outrage from Apple when it was opened in 2016, with CEO Tim Cook calling it "total political crap." Then-US President Donald Trump slammed European Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, who spearheaded the campaign to root out special tax deals and crack down on big US tech companies, as the "tax lady" who "really hates the US."

In financial terms, it represents the largest case of EU's tax campaign, which brings an end to the long-running dispute **PHOTO: ANI**

In its 2020 ruling, the European Union's General Court disagreed with the European Commission, the bloc's executive branch, which had accused Apple of striking an illegal tax deal with Irish authorities so that it could pay extremely low rates.

"We are disappointed with today's decision as previously the General Court reviewed the facts and categorically annulled this case," Apple said in a statement.

"There has never been a special deal," the company said.

The EU has long demanded that Apple pay back billions of taxes for two Irish subsidies that the company argues are primarily taxable in the United States. Arguing that they were being subjected to double taxation, and that the situation did not preclude state aid from Dublin, Apple initially won a ruling against the European Commission to annul the payment order.

Despite the billions it stood to gain, the Irish government opposed the Commission's case; the country has become the European hub for a number of US tech companies.

The Commission first appealed that decision in 2020, prompting four more years of legal wrangling before today's ECJ verdict in their favor.

The ruling that has now been upheld was one of a number of aggressive moves by European officials to hold US businesses, particularly big tech companies, accountable under the EU's rules on taxation, competition and privacy. In financial terms, it represents the largest case of the EU's tax campaign.

—*PTI with agencies*

Google loses EU court battle over ₹62K cr antitrust fine

LONDON, 10 SEPT

Google lost its final legal challenge on Tuesday against a European Union penalty for giving its own shopping recommendations an illegal advantage over rivals in search results, ending a long-running antitrust case that came with a whopping fine.

The European Union's Court of Justice upheld a lower court's decision, rejecting the company's appeal against the 2.4 billion euro (USD 2.7 billion) penalty from the European Commission, the 27-nation bloc's top antitrust enforcer.

"By today's judgment, the Court of Justice dismisses the appeal and thus upholds the judgment of the General Court," the court said in a press release summarising its decision.

The commission's original decision in 2017 accused the Silicon Valley giant of unfairly directing visitors to its own Google Shopping service to the detriment of competitors. It was one of three multibillion-euro fines that the commission imposed on Google in the previous decade as Brussels started ramping up its crackdown on the tech industry.

"We are disappointed with the decision of the Court, which relates to a very specific set of facts," Google said in a brief statement.

At the same time, the company appealed the decision to the courts. But the EU General Court, the tribunal's lower section, rejected its challenge in 2021 and the Court of Justice's adviser later recommended rejecting the appeal.

Google is still appealing the other two EU antitrust penalties, which involved its Android mobile operating system and AdSense advertising platform.

The company was dealt a setback in the Android case when the EU General Court upheld the commission's 4.125 billion euro fine in a 2022 decision. Its initial appeal against a 1.49 billion euro fine in the AdSense case has yet to be decided. —*PTI*

Google is appealing against 2 more EU antitrust penalities **PHOTO: ANI**

EFI to hold Jumping Classics from tomorrow

BENGALURU, 10 SEPT

Promising young riders like World Challenge silver medallist Puneet Jhakar, junior national champion Sreshth Raju Mantena will be seen action in the FEI Jumping Children's Classics, beginning here from Thursday. With the 2024 domestic calendar of the Equestrian Federation of India (EFI) now underway, the event will kick off with the U14 selection trials on Wednesday. Around 50 talented young riders will compete across three age categories – Gold (Age 12-14), Silver (Age 10-14), and Bronze (Age 10-14) at the Embassy International Riding School here. "The EFI CSN Show Jumping event and the FEI Jumping Children's Classics are crucial not only for showcasing our athletes on the global stage but also for bringing together the next generation of national talent and observing their development and progress," said Col. Jaiveer Singh, the EFI Secretary General. *—PTI*

Sophie Devine to lead NZ squad at Women's T20 WC

WELLINGTON, 10 SEPT

New Zealand batting all-rounder Sophie Devine will lead the Kiwi squad at the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024. It would be Sophie's ninth straight appearance at the Women's T20 World Cup. The 35-year-old will look ahead to lifting the trophy that has eluded the side since they finished runners-up in 2009 and 2010. The squad also includes many experienced star players, such as Suzie Bates, Lea Tahuhu, Amelia Kerr, and Maddy Green. Devine and Bates have appeared at every Women's T20 World Cup edition. Rosemary Mair, who missed the tour of England in July with a back injury, has been added to the squad for more strength to the pace attack. *—ANI*

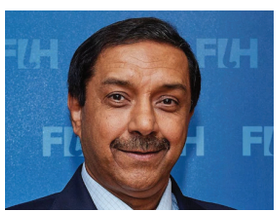


PHOTO: X

Incumbent Ikram set for second term as FIH President

LAUSANNE, 10 SEPT

Incumbent International Hockey Federation (FIH) president Tayyab Ikram is set to be elected unopposed as the head of the world body at its 49th Congress in Muscat, Oman on 9 November. The nominations for FIH elections were received by the August 31 deadline for the positions to be elected by the National Associations that are members of the FIH at its Statutory Congress. Ikram has a long association with the sport. The former Pakistan and China hockey coach is a member of the IOC Olympic Solidarity Commission, and has been an Executive Board member of the FIH since 2016. On 5 November 2022, he was elected as the 13th President of FIH. *—PTI*

England players rise in ICC Women's ODI rankings

DUBAI, 10 SEPT

A host of England players made ground in the latest International Cricket Council's (ICC) Women's ODI rankings following their eye-catching performances in the ongoing 50-over series against Ireland. England raced to an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match ODI series with a set of dominating performances. Seasoned batter Tammy Beaumont showed her class with a remarkable 150* in the second match in Belfast. She moved one spot to 13th in the ODI Women's batter rankings. Beaumont, with her effortless display with the bat, has scored the third most centuries by any player in women's ODI cricket. England's stand-in captain, Kate Cross, progressed in the ODI Women's bowlers rankings. *—ANI*

PHOTO: X@EQUIPEDEFRANCE

Mbappe-less France beat Belgium 2-0

Muani, Dembele score for Les Bleus' victory

GENEVA, 10 SEPT

Even after leaving star forward Kylian Mbappé on the bench, France handed Belgium yet another loss in the Nations League.

Two of Mbappé's former teammates at Paris Saint-Germain, Randal Kolo Muani and Ousmane Dembélé, struck with powerful shots either side of halftime in a 2-0 win in Lyon on Monday. The latest win helped France make up ground in the top-tier Nations League group after losing to Italy 3-1 in Paris on Friday. Italy beat Israel 2-1 on Monday and leads the four-team group.

Also, Erling Haaland scored a decisive 80th-minute goal in Norway's 2-1 win over Austria and Slovenia star Benjamin Šeško scored a hat trick in a 3-0 win over Kazakhstan. Haaland and Šeško once were clubmates in Austria at Salzburg.

Mbappé was rested from the start despite France seeking to avoid a third straight loss, two months after a European Championship semifinals exit against eventual title winner Spain. Real Madrid's new star had little preseason preparation after Euro 2024 and played a full game against Italy. He was eased in against Belgium by coach Didier Deschamps, who sent on his captain in the 67th minute to replace Kolo Muani.

France extended its winning run over Belgium to four games in the Mbappé era. Starting in the 2018 World Cup semifinals, Les Bleus also eliminated Belgium in the 2021 Nations League semifinals and in the Euro 2024 round of 16. Monday's game was 43 years to the day since France lost a competition game against Belgium, in 1981 in Brussels in a World Cup qualifier.

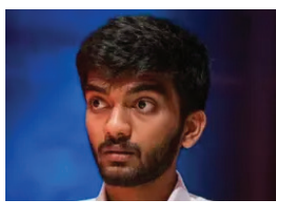
Hat trick for Aktürkoglu

Turkey leads its second-tier group from Wales on goal difference with both on four points after wins. Kerem Aktürkoglu scored a hat trick for Turkey in a 3-1 result over Iceland just days after his move from Galatasaray to Benfica restored his chance to play in the Champions League this season. *—AP*

EYE ON GUKESH, PRAGGS

Indians eye medals again in 45th Chess Olympiad

BUDAPEST, 10 SEPT



D Gukesh PHOTO: X

The top-seeded Indian women's team, spearheaded by D Harika and R Vaishali, would be a strong podium contender thanks partly to a depleted field, while the D Gukesh-led men's outfit will also fancy its chances in the 45th Chess Olympiad starts here on Wednesday.

Koneru Humpy's non-participation in the event has not hampered the team's chances much as Vaishali has jumped significantly in rankings and is a force to reckon with in the women's circle. Without Humpy, it will be Grandmaster D Harika on the top board, followed by Vaishali, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agarwal who will serve as the mainstay. Tania Sachdev is in the side as the reserved player and is likely to have her share of games.

The young Indian team comprising Vidit Gujrathi, R Praggnanandhaa, D Gukesh, Arjun Erigaise and P Harikrishna has all the allures to better their last outing when they had won the Bronze. This time the team is seeded second.

The format will be 11 rounds in both open and women's section and the winning teams will get two match points for every victory scored.

China has fielded a hugely depleted team. A look at the September rating list issued by FIDE, the World Chess Federation, confirms that the top four women players on the list are all from China and yet not one of them is part of the contingent here.

With Russia unable to participate for the second consecutive time in the biennial event due to sporting sanctions and Ukraine also not able to gather their best team together, all eyes will be on the Indian women's team that has a good mix of youth and experience. *—PTI*

AIFFF suspends Anwar Ali for 4 months

KOLKATA, 10 SEPT

The All India Football Federation on Tuesday imposed a four-month suspension on India international Anwar Ali after finding the defender "guilty" of illegally terminating his four-year contract with Mohun Bagan who are also eligible for a huge compensation of Rs 12.90 crore.

The Players Status Committee of the AIFF also ruled that the Anwar's parent club Delhi FC and East Bengal, with whom the defender had entered into a lucrative five-year deal, have been banned from registering players for two transfer windows -- 2024-25 winter and 2025-26 summer.

Anwar Ali, East Bengal and Delhi FC are all jointly "liable" for the compensation amount which includes Rs 8.40 crore for the residual value of the contract, Rs 2 crore already paid to Delhi FC under loan agreement, and Rs 2.50 crore for other "damages suffered by the club," stated the decision of the AIFF Players Status Committee.

The transfer of India centre-back Ali to East Bengal from Mohun Bagan following a unilateral termination of his loan, had sparked a controversy in Kolkata Maidan. The 23-year-old, who played a key role in their Indian Super League Shield-winning campaign, scoring three goals and one assist in 26 games last season, terminated his contract and joined arch-rivals East Bengal in a five-year deal.

Mohun Bagan then challenged the decision by filing a complaint with the AIFF's Player Status Committee. This suspension is applicable for his club matches and he will be eligible to play for India. *—PTI*

Anwar Ali PHOTO: X

F1 car design great Newey to join Aston Martin

SILVERSTONE, 10 SEPT

Formula 1's most influential car designer, Adrian Newey, is joining Aston Martin in March 2025 after leaving Red Bull, ending months of speculation over a backroom figure who seemed more in-demand than any driver.

Newey has spent nearly two decades with Red Bull and is widely credited with putting the team on its path to dominance in F1. Now he's joining a team that has big ambitions to challenge for the title and the backing of billionaire Lawrence Stroll — but no race wins yet.

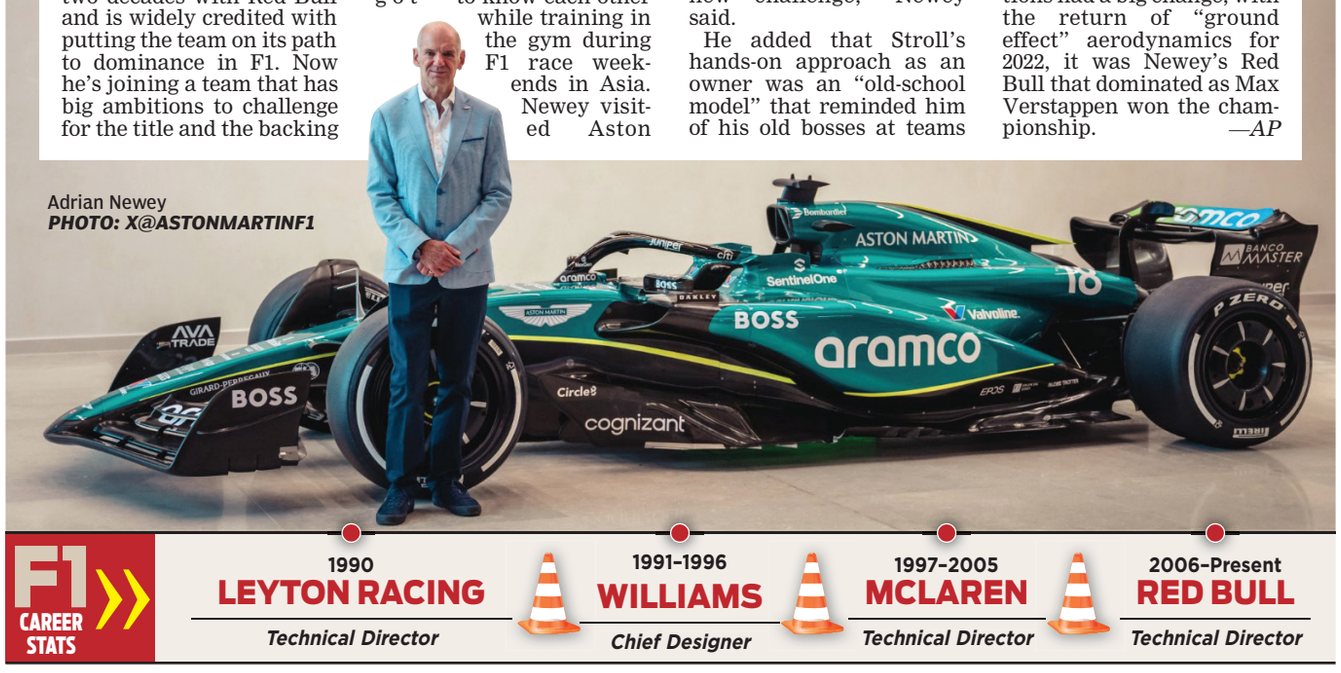
Newey will arrive in his new role as "managing technical partner" in time to help shape how Aston Martin responds to the new F1 car regulations coming for 2026. He'll also be made a shareholder in the team.

Newey said he and Stroll got to know each other while training in the gym during F1 race weekends in Asia. Newey visited Aston Martin's new headquarters in June as Stroll closed in on a signing which the Canadian billionaire called "another demonstration of our ambition to build a Formula 1 team capable of fighting for world championships." "You have to be honest with yourself and you have to keep yourself fresh and so I felt I needed a new challenge," Newey said.

He added that Stroll's hands-on approach as an owner was an "old-school model" that reminded him of his old bosses at teams like Williams and McLaren, which both won titles with Newey-designed cars in the 1990s.

"I was very flattered to have a lot of approaches from various teams, but really, Lawrence's passion and commitment and enthusiasm is very endearing, it's very persuasive."

The last time the regulations had a big change, with the return of "ground effect" aerodynamics for 2022, it was Newey's Red Bull that dominated as Max Verstappen won the championship. *—AP*



Adrian Newey PHOTO: X@ASTONMARTINF1

F1 CAREER STATS

1990	1991–1996	1997–2005	2006–Present
LEYTON RACING	WILLIAMS	MCLAREN	RED BULL
Technical Director	Chief Designer	Technical Director	Technical Director

KARNATAKA'S HASHIKA BREAKS RECORD IN 400M FREESTYLE SWIMMING

MANGALURU, 10 SEPT

Karnataka's Hashika Ramachandra broke a 13-year-old national record in the 400m women's freestyle event at the 77th Senior National Aquatic Championships here on Tuesday.

Hashika broke the national record, held previously by Richa Mishra (4:25.76) from Jharkhand, by clocking 4:24.70 minutes. The Men's 400m saw Karnataka's Aneesh S Gowda claim the top spot with a time of 3:56.59 minutes. *—PTI*

Hashika Ramachandra PHOTO: X

Rinku picked for 2nd round of Duleep Trophy

ANANTAPUR, 10 SEPT

Majority of the players picked in the India squad for the first Test against Bangladesh, including Rishabh Pant, K L Rahul and Shubman Gill, were on Tuesday rested for the second round of Duleep Trophy beginning here on September 12.

The others picked in the national squad on Sunday include Akash Deep, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Dhruv Jurel, who all have been exempted from the second round. Left-arm pacer Yash Dayal and Sarfaraz Khan, who too are part of India's 16-man squad for the opening Test, have not been released from their Duleep Trophy duties indicating they won't be part of the playing eleven against Bangladesh in the game to be played in Chennai. "The selectors have named Pratham Singh (Railways) as a replacement for Gill, Akshay Wadkar as a replacement for KL Rahul and SK Rasheed as a replacement for Jurel," said BCCI. Mayank Agarwal has been named as India A captain in Gill's place. As Jaiswal and Pant's replacements, the selectors have named Suyash Prabhudessai and Rinku Singh. *—PTI*

Rinku Singh PHOTO:

Noida venue may have hosted its last int'l game

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Match referee Javagal Srinath's report on the preparedness of Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports complex in Greater Noida will go a long way in deciding the fate of the venue which is under the scanner after the one-off Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand failed to get underway on successive days.

For once, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which often becomes the favourite whipping boy, isn't responsible for the mess. The 'home board' is the Afghanistan Cricket Board, which selected a familiar and cost-effective venue despite being offered the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and Green Park in Kanpur as options.

BCCI isn't involved in this Test match. It was the Afghanistan Cricket Board's choice and the Greater Noida Authority was supposed to provide them with international standard facilities. BCCI hasn't hosted any of its domestic games here since 2019 (Vijay Hazare Trophy) and is unlikely to host one in near or distant future in these substandard conditions, if sources are to be believed.

The ICC, for one, would follow the standard protocol for any given international venue where the match referee's report decide the further course of action. *—PTI*

GOLD MEDALISTS GET ₹75L

Paralympic champs return to hero's welcome

NEW DELHI, 10 SEPT

Swarmed by hundreds of supporters, garlanded and fed sweets, India's Paralympic medal-winners returned to a jubilant welcome on Tuesday after securing an unprecedented haul of 29 medals at the just-concluded Games in Paris.

There was the customary dhol and euphoric chants hailing them as the athletes made their way out of the Indira Gandhi International Airport this morning. Supporters, sports administrators and families of the athletes lined up to show their appreciation for the contingent. "Thank you so much for this grand welcome," javelin thrower Sumit Antil told PTI.

He clinched a second successive gold in the F64 category by breaking his own Games record with a throw of 70.59m. The reigning world champion became the second Indian after shooter Avani Lekhara to defend the Paralympics title.

Para athletes being welcomed on their return to India from the Paris Paralympics 2024, at the IGI Airport, in New Delhi on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Paralympics medalists to get Rs 75 lakh for Gold

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday announced cash awards of Rs 75 lakh to the gold medallists, Rs 50 lakh for the silver winners and Rs 30 lakh for the Indian athletes who have won bronze in the just-concluded Paralympic Games in Paris.

Those excelling in mixed teams events, like archer Sheetal Devi, will get richer by Rs 22.5 lakh. The minister announced this during an event organised to felicitate the medallists at the mega-event. Mandaviya also pledged full support and facilities for para-athletes to aim for more medals at the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics. "The country is rising in Paralympics and para sports. From 4 medals in 2016, India have won 19 medals in Tokyo and 29 in Paris with 18th place finish," Mandaviya said.

"We will provide all the facilities to all of our para-athletes so that we can win more medals and gold medals in 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics." India concluded their historic Paris Paralympics campaign with 29 medals, including seven gold, nine silver, and 13 bronze medals, marking the country's best performance in the competition's history. *—PTI*